The Gunns:
History, Myths and Genealogy

Third edition

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The most interesting part of the Scots' nation is the Highlanders, the descendants of the aboriginal Celts[1]

the Gunns had been a branch of the purest aborigines of the north[2]

My fathers were Highlanders long ago…[3]

For Wendy

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This book is a print on demand book. There may be one more edition of this book when the Clan Gunn Chief issue, discussed within, is resolved.

See https://clangunn1.blogspot.com and https://www.facebook.com/ClanGunn1 for further information.

[1] Page xxi, James Logan, *The Scottish Gael, Volume 1.*
[2] Page 173, Thomas Smibert, *The Clans of the Highlands of Scotland.*
[3] Les Murray, from 'Four Gaelic Poems' in *Collected Poems*.

Contents

Introduction 7

1. A possible origin for the Gunns 11

1.1 Before the Picts 11
1.2 Gunns were Picts then Celts 15
1.3 Caithness place name origin; a discussion 17
1.4 So how did these Picts / Celts become Gunns? 19

2. The Gunn Orkney Islands / Norse / Viking origin myth 21

2.1 The Gunn surname is not of Orkney Islands / Norse / Viking origin 22
2.2 The supposed Gunn Chief Snaekoll Gunnison did not have children problem 24
2.3 The supposed 'Gunn Chief Ottar Snaekollson' was not a Gunn problem 28

3. On the mythical Gunn Chiefs from Ottar Snaekollson to Coroner Gunn 31

3.1 James De Gun / de Gunn (or Jakop / James Gunn) 32
3.2 Ingram Gunn 33
3.3 The knighthood Chief Gunn problem 33
3.4 Conclusion 35

4. Why Gunns are not a traditional Clan 37

5. Diversion 1: the Gunn 'Westford Knight' myth 41

5.1 The *Zeno narrative* is a work of fiction problem 41
5.2 Historic / general problems with the 'Westford Knight' 44
5.3 Archaeological objections 45
5.4 The AVM Runestone hoax 47
5.5 Summary 47

6. Diversion 2: Saint Donan / St Donnan and his Gunn non-links 49

6.1 St Donan's life and why he would not have gone to the Kildonan area 50
6.2 On 'Kildonan' in Sutherland not being related to St Donan 53
6.3 St Donan's Church? at Kildonan 55

7. The Gunn / Keith feud myth 57

7.1 Gunn / Keith / Mackay battles – or not? 57
7.2 Helen Gunn of Braemore story, supposedly set around 1410 61
7.3 Another Braemore Gunn story, perhaps from the late 1400s 63

8. Coroner Gunn of Caithness: the first Gunn in history 65

8.1 The position and significance of a Coroner 66
8.2 Coroner Gunn; name and life 69

8.3 Coroner Gunn's death c. early 1450s 72
8.4 Coroner Gunn's children 76
8.5 The supposed Coroner Gunn castle(s) 77

9. The Gunn family trees / genealogy 83

9.1 Lord Lyon Sellar's Interlocutor 2011 83
9.2 The 1896 Gunn family tree of Captain Alexander Gunn 84
9.3 Other early Gunn family trees / genealogical sources 87

10. Clan Gunn Chiefs / MacHamish Gunns: summary 91

10.1 On the use of the word MacHamish, 'son of James' 91
10.2 The traditional Clan Gunn Chief line, a simplified chart 93
10.3 Traditional Clan Gunn Chiefs; a summary 94

11. Lives from Coroner Gunn 99

PART ONE A – Lives from Chief Coroner Gunn (1,1) to Chief William Mhor (8) 100
1.1 CHIEF CORONER GUNN 100
2.2 CHIEF JAMES GUNN 100
3.3 CHIEF WILLIAM MACHAMISH CATTIGH GUNN 102
4.4 CHIEF WILLIAM MACHAMISH GUNN 104
5.5 CHIEF UNKNOWN MACHAMISH GUNN 107
5. ALEXANDER MACHAMISH GUNN 108
* AN HISTORICAL SWEEP 108
6.6 CHIEF DAVID GUNN 109
7.7 CHIEF ALEXANDER MACDAVID GUNN 110
7.8 WILLIAM BEAG GUNN – see PART ONE B. 111
* SOME FURTHER HISTORY 112
8. CHIEF WILLIAM 'MHOR / MOR' GUNN Died without issue 113

PART ONE B – 7.8 William Beag Gunn, the pivotal early Gunn 115
7.8 WILLIAM BEAG GUNN 115

PART TWO - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's eldest son was 8.9 Chief Alexander Gunn. His children included 9.13 Chief John 'Killernan / Navidale' Gunn and 9.15 Chief Donald Crotach Gunn 120
7.8 WILLIAM BEAG GUNN 120
8.9 CHIEF ALEXANDER 'KILLERNAN' GUNN 120
9.13 CHIEF JOHN 'KILLERNAN / NAVIDALE' GUNN 123
10. ALEXANDER GUNN AND BROTHERS 126
9.14 CATHERINE GUNN 126
9. ALEXANDER GUNN 127
9.15 CHIEF DONALD CROTACH GUNN, the ongoing, traditional Chief line. See PART THREE. 129

PART THREE - 9.15 Chief Donald Crotach Gunn and the ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line 130
9.15 CHIEF DONALD CROTACH GUNN 130
10.19 CHIEF ALEXANDER GUNN OF BADANLOCH 134
11. CHIEF WILLIAM GUNN 147
11. MORRISON GUNN 148
10.20 GEORGE 'CORRISH' GUNN 150

10.21 ESTHER GUNN 150
10.22 WILLIAM (LT. COL.) GUNN 150
10.23 MARGARET GUNN, the ongoing, traditional Chief line. See PARTS FOUR A and FOUR B. 151

PART FOUR A - 10.23 Margaret Gunn, her 1st son's Clan Gunn Chief line *152*
10.23 MARGARET GUNN 152
12.36 CHIEF HECTOR GUNN 1st son 158
13.47 CHIEF GEORGE GUNN 158

PART FOUR B - 10.23 Margaret Gunn and her 2nd son's ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line *161*
11.32 ALEXANDER OF DALNAGLATON GUNN 2nd son 161
12.37 JOHN 'DALNAGLATON BRAEHOUR' GUNN 161
THE GUNNS OF BRAEHOUR 163
13.48 DONALD 'BRAEHOUR & BRAWLBIN' GUNN 163
14.57 JOHN 'DURNESS' GUNN 163
14.58 BARBARA 'BRAEHOUR' GUNN 165
14.59 CAPT. ALEXANDER GUNN 165
14. JEAN (JANE) GUNN 165
14. ALEXANDRINA GUNN 166
14. GEORGE GUNN? 166
13.49 WILLIAM GUNN 166
14. ISABEL GUNN 166
14. BARBARA GUNN 166
14. ELIZABETH GUNN 166
14. HON. DONALD 'CANADA' GUNN 166
14. JOHN GUNN 166
14. MARJORY GUNN 166
14. WILLIAM 'WARANGA VICTORIA AUSTRALIA' GUNN 166
14. JANET GUNN 166
14. ROBERT GUNN 166
14. ALEXANDER GUNN 167
14. WILLIAM GUNN 167
14. ALEXANDER GUNN 167
14. REV. ANGUS GUNN 167
14. MARJORY GUNN 167
14. JOHN GUNN 167
12.38 GEORGE 'DALNAGLATON' GUNN 168
12.39 ANGUS / ANEAS GUNN 168
12.40 CHRISTIAN GUNN 168
12.41 JEAN GUNN 168
12.42 MARGARET GUNN 169

PART FIVE - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's descent line through his second son 8.10 John in Navidale of Borrobol to 9.16 George to 10.24 John who married 10.23 Margaret daughter of 9.15 Chief Donald Crotach *170*
8.10 JOHN IN NAVIDALE OF BORROBOL GUNN 170
9.16 GEORGE 'BORROBOL' GUNN 171
10.24 JOHN 'BORROBOL, KINBRACE FARM, RUMSDALE, GRIMACHARY' GUNN. 173

PART SIX - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's descent lines through his third son 8.11 Donald 'the Scholar' to Kinbrace, Mulbuie, Osclay Gunns and more *174*
8.11 DONALD 'SCHOLAR OF KINBRACE' GUNN 174
9.17 WILLIAM 'KINBRACE' GUNN 177
10.25 ADAM 'KINBRACE' GUNN 177
11.33 WILLIAM 'KINBRACE HOUSTRY DUNBEATH' GUNN 178
12.44 ROBERT GUNN 180
13.55 WILLIAM GUNN 180
14 ADAM 'DUNBEATH' GUNN 180

PART SEVEN - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's lines from his fourth son 8.12 William of Acheneccan Gunn *182*
8.12 WILLIAM OF ACHENECCAN GUNN (and others) 182

12. MacHamish 'owners' of Killernan, Borrobol, Navidale and Kinbrace Estates. 185

13. Biographies from Alexander 'Dalnaglaton' Gunn's ongoing Braehour Chief line 187

The Honorable Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada 1797 – 1878 188
William Gunn of Waranga Park, Victoria, Australia 1804 – 1888 195
Donald Gunn J. P. - from Brawlbin, Caithness to Ballarat, Victoria, Australia 1832 – 1901 210
The Honourable John Alexander Gunn of N.S.W., Australia 1860 - 1910 250
Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale, 1837 - 1918 259
Marcus Gunn 1842 – 1899, brother of Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale 263

14. Further bits and pieces 270

14.1 MacRob / Braemore Gunns 270
14.2 The Covenanters, especially 1639-1640 274
14.3 Jacobite rebellions and Gunn non-involvement 275
14.4 The Clearances 277
14.5 Emigration 282
14.6 Gunn tartan 285
14.7 The fictional, traditional Gunn Crest badge and motto 286
14.8 Septs 288

15. Conclusion 289

Appendices 291

1. The ongoing Clan Gunn Chief line, established 1803 291
2. The modern invention of a Chief 2015 298
3. The Chief of the Clan Gunn – a simplified descendant list 301
4. A reason why the Orkney Islands Gunn origin myth may have started 305
5. Concerning the Gunns, according to Thomas Smibert 1850 306
6. Helen (Gunn) of Braemore (a Victorian poem) 310

Bibliography 317

Introduction

1.

It is, of course, a fine thing to seek Scottish ancestry, and engaging with all aspects of Scottish history and culture is to be encouraged – but it must be done in the full knowledge that much of the mythology about clans, surnames, tartans and the like is just that...[4]

I have been interested in Clan Gunn history for many decades not least as it was of importance within my family for many generations; assorted primary source material starting from before the Highland Clearances had been kept and many family trees created. When I was young the heroic Gunn 'history' was appealing but so were stories of giants and tigers and fairies at the bottom of the garden. With age I needed more; what academic evidence was there for the Gunn stories? The more I looked the more the supposed facts crumbled.

So, this text is the result – it is as factual as I can make it however it is not quite the final answer. Although I have worked on the Sutherland Estate[5] papers in the National Library of Scotland I have not read all the relevant documents, one reason being that my knowledge of 1600s-1700s Latin is nil. And I am sure some Estate papers will have been wrongly filed. The next person exploring those documents could start by tidying up exactly when Gunns – and which Gunns - 'owned' Killernan, Borrobol, Achentoul and Navidale as I have not been able to tie down the exact years. And I strongly suspect that some Learable Gunns have a MacHamish / Chief of the Clan Gunn link (see chapter 10) but I have not been able to solve that problem. I have also explored the National Records of Scotland and elsewhere, the details will be seen in the following chapters.

Much Scottish clan history is just Victorian mythologising[6] created by the cultural power of people such as Sir Walter Scott.[7] Thomas Sinclair's *The Gunns* and Mark Rugg Gunn's *History of the Clan Gunn* implicitly support this mythological approach by regularly blurring actual events and people with legends and the historically impossible (which includes events wrongly attributed to particular Gunns).

The key book for early Gunn facts is Sir Robert Gordon's *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland*[8] – he lived from 1580 to c.1650. It's really a history of Sutherland and Caithness with a solid dose of his family's genealogy. His account stopped in 1630 so it is reasonable to assume that he

[4] Dr Bruce Durie, 'What is a Clan' http://www.bletherskite.net/2013/10/04/what-is-a-clan-by-dr-bruce-durie/#comment-21492 accessed 1 May 2014.
[5] Mark Rugg Gunn points out these papers had not been looked at by him, see his page 7, *History of the Clan Gunn.*
[6] See http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/society/c_scottishidentity.html accessed 30 December 2012 for a discussion of this issue. One writer views the result of this mythologising as 'clanland' see page 128 Paul Basu *Highland Homecomings: Genealogy And Heritage Tourism in the Scottish Diaspora.* It can be argued that to be a member of a Clan Society requires a quasi-religious 'leap of faith' to accept the myths which a Society views as 'history' – and, like with religions, the people of the faith dislike analysis of their belief system. For more analysis of 'heritage mythology' as religion see pp. 200-203 Prof. Celeste Ray, *Highland Heritage; Scottish Americans in the American South.*
[7] '...the central dilemma of the Scottish historian: how to reconcile the legacy of Scott and the romantic movement with the methods, practices and concerns of history in today's world' - pages 17-18, Mathew H. Hammond, 'Ethnicity and Writing of Medieval Scottish History' in *The Scottish Historical Review* Volume 85 Number 1, No. 219.' The Scottification of Scottishness' is Celeste Ray's term. See page 29 *ibid*.
[8] Page 43, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* says 'We owe him a debt of gratitude for much of the local history would have been unrecorded but for his pen, and he lived near enough to the times to be to be able to paint a colourful and in the main accurate picture'.

wrote the manuscript about then. The point is simple – Gordon's facts should overall[9] be accepted as he was the person closest to the time and tried to write the truth as it was known. Later versions of events which embellish Gordon's text should be ignored. Gordon was reliant on oral accounts so occasionally his events can be questioned where they lack logic. Another occasionally valuable text is 'Clan Gunn 1801'[10] by the Reverend Thomas Sage which is a mix of myth and, closer to his time, useful genealogy.

Gunns are, by origin, best viewed as a non-related tribe and are not a traditional clan (see Chapter 4) but are a modern one, established in 1803 as I discuss in the following section. This means Gunns share a surname but rarely anything more[11] bar with known family members. To Gunns reading this text, unless you can demonstrate by provable genealogy do not assume that anybody mentioned in this volume shares any close relationship with you.

I have mainly restricted the genealogy in this text to the Chief of the Clan Gunn lines.

2. Chief of the Clan Gunn / Clan Gunn

'Chief of the Clan Gunn' and 'Clan Gunn' are important but potentially confusing terms for readers.

The Chief of the Clan Gunn was legally established by the Scottish Chancery in 1803 with the appointment of Chief Hector Gunn, followed by his son Chief George Gunn (the Scottish Chancery also legally ratified his title)**.** This line became extinct on 20 August 1874 with the death of Chief Hector Gunn. See pages 152-160. With these appointments the Clan Gunn became a recognised, modern clan – and the title of 'Chief' and 'Clan Gunn' was then 'awarded' backwards to the earliest times as originally Gunns were not a Clan, see Chapter 4.

Of more importance, following the end of that line, is that Chief Hector's younger brother Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton is recognised as the son *'of John Gunn of Kinbrace and his wife Margaret Gunn of Badenloch, daughter of Donald Gunn of Badenloch, 6th MacHamish, Chief of Clan Gunn who died in 1725.'*[12] This is the view of the 2015 invented (see Appendix 2) Clan Gunn Chief, Iain Gunn of Banniskirk. I agree with the comment. Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton's line is the ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. For more detail see pages 152 – 160 onwards.

In late 2024 we have the situation that I have proved my descent from Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton – the College of Arms has registered my genealogy showing it. This means my descent is legally proved in England, Wales and parts of the British Commonwealth. It is not proved in Scotland as, due to the Act of Union, Scottish law remains an independent entity.

[9] One can also occasionally question what Gordon wrote as events may have been shaped by retelling, the odd primary source may have been found since his time and he had a tendency to place his family in the best possible light.
[10] This can be found at 'Nucleus: The Nuclear and Caithness Archive' at Wick where it is part of the papers of Captain Gunn of Braehour.
[11] Celeste Ray in her *Highland Heritage*, page 80, writes that 'clan names confirm belief in one's kinship within the community and integrates clan history within one's own perception of self and identity'; in other words, some people get self-image by knowing they might be related to famous people.
[12] See Appendix 2.

However, in 2015 a Clan Gunn Convention was held which established the previously mentioned Iain Gunn of Banniskirk as Chief due to the (wrong) belief that no-one could show descent from the old Clan Gunn Chiefs. The Clan Gunn Society website accessed 2 August 2024 states that *'Iain Gunn of Banniskirk … accepted that there might well be someone with a closer genealogical link to the last Chief and if such a person could prove an undisputed claim to the Chiefship he would readily stand down.'*

I could go on but in summary the ongoing Clan Gunn Chief problem is simple -

1) I have legally proved descent from Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton and therefore have proved descent from the traditional Clan Gunn Chief line.

2) The Clan Gunn Convention / Derbhfine in 2015 was an error in that it was held on the basis that no-one could prove descent from the traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. The error is shown by the first point - and so the Convention's result was wrong and should be ignored / overturned.

How this Clan Gunn Chief conflict will work out is unclear. For more detail see Appendices 1 and 2.

3. Concerning terminology and numbers

There are terminological problems associated with Gunn history.

Anglicisation. Firstly, there is the Anglicisation / ethnic cleansing issue. The original Pictish / Celtic Gunns of northern mainland Scotland are hidden from history. I have reluctantly decided to use Anglicised names (but not 'George' which is often wrongly applied to the Coroner[13]) for later Gunns as by doing so it is easier for readers to relate to earlier versions of Gunn history.

Wadset / tack. A wadset was basically when a person paid the rent upfront for an estate for a set period of many years. The wadsetter could then charge rent from lesser people / farms on the estate to help with the cost of running the property. At the end of the agreed period the real owner had to return the original money within a set period (suggestions range from immediately[14] to forty years) or the wadsetter could keep the land.[15] Progressively wadsets fell out of favour and tacks replaced them. A tack is essentially a lease of an Estate with rent paid each year.

Historically the Gunns did not own land; land was owned technically by the Crown but in life by people such as the Earl of Sutherland or the Earl of Caithness. Wealthy Gunns had wadsets / tacks of Estates from such people. The actual Gunn(s) who had the wadset were 'of' the property; the rest of his family who lived there were 'at' the proper. A tenant was 'in' the property. So a 'Gunn of Killernan'

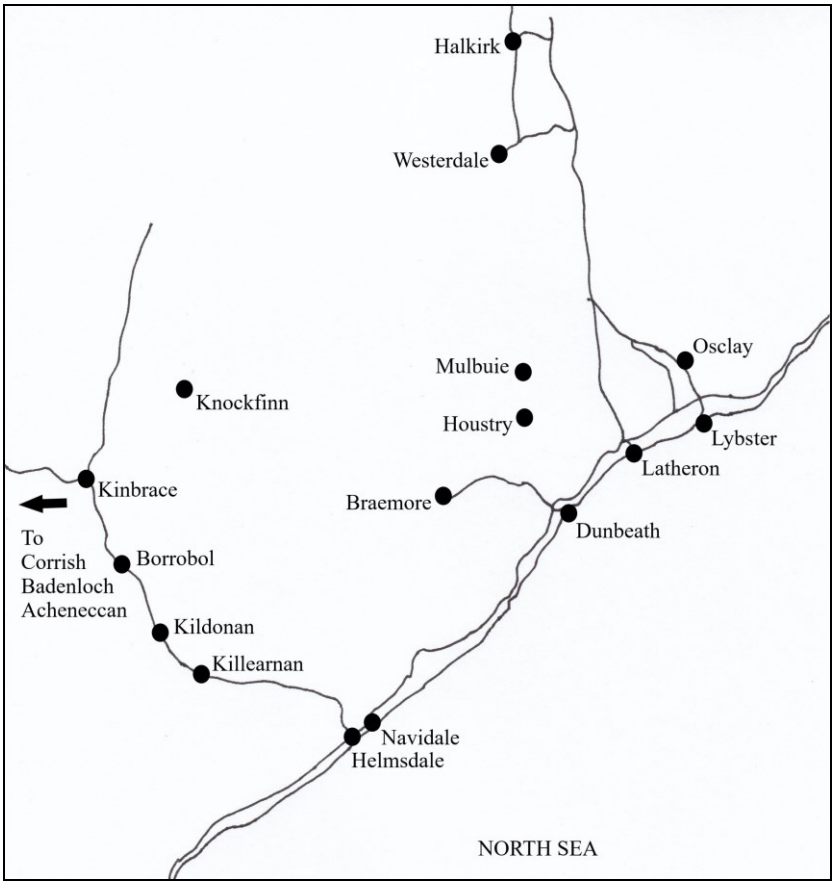
[13] Correctly he was the Coroner of Caithness, not Crowner as some believe. Sound the two words out loud and one can see how the confusion arose especially before dictionaries were invented. It important to note that we have no idea of his first name in Gaelic, Pictish or English which is why I am not using 'George'.
[14] Page 320, Earl of Cromartie, *A Highland History*.
[15] Drawn from Page xxii ed. R.J. Adam, *Sutherland Estate Management 1802-1816, Volume 1*.

was significantly more important than a 'Gunn at Killernan.' Time impacts on the terms – an elder son 'at' a property would become 'of' the property with the death of his father, for example. Careless transcription can happen so and award the wrong of / at / in to a person.

Coroner. Coroner Gunn was an important man but the Scottish position of Coroner does not match English or American coroners. I discuss the position in detail in chapter 8.1.

Places. Finally, there are words (mainly place names and people) which have had varied spellings over the years; there are many. A few examples are Killernan / Kilearnan, Beag / Bheg, Mhor / Mor, Borrobol / Borobol, Snaekol / Snaekoll, Crotach / Croitach, Knockfinn / Knockfin and Achanakin / Acheneccan / Achneakans.[16] In most cases any usage or all usages are sound, given that soundness I have aimed for consistent usage except where I am quoting from a text.

Numbers before names. Many Gunns will be identified in the form (2) or (2,2). The first number indicates the generation from the Coroner, with the Coroner being (1), the second number indicating the seniority of the person so (1,1). Numbers such as i or ii indicates the seniority of people who I no longer explore due to them no longer being of interest – not Gunns if you like.



Some key places in Gunn history.

[16] This spelling was in use in 1812. See page 103, ed. R.J. Adam, *Sutherland Estate Management 1802-1816, Volume 1*.

1. A possible origin for the Gunns

1.1 Before the Picts[17]

The renowned writer Neil M. Gunn considered he was a
'remnant of an ancient race among mere upstart Gaels ... and parvenu Norsemen.'[18]

The most useful way to consider Gunn origin is that they were probably an indigenous, essentially non-related tribal group who from a very early time populated parts of what is now modern Caithness and Sutherland.

Ptolemy's second century map with tribes as spelt by Blau in 1654[19] *- Dunnet Head and Noss Head are added to enable geographical clarity. Note the Cornabij tribe next to Dunnet Head.*

Ptolemy's map of Scotland is awkward as Scotland is on a major angle but the real north of Scotland makes sense. Look at the map's right side where Dunnet Head and Noss Head are marked. Ptolemy identified northern Scotland as having the tribes of Cornavii (in greater Caithness), Caerini, Carnonacae, and Creones / Cerones. The spelling of these groups is not fixed as his map was made in the second century,[20] no original copies survive and he wrote in Greek.

[17] 'According to *Collins Encyclopaedia of Scotland*, "the Picts did not 'arrive' - in a sense they had always been there, for they were the descendants of the first people to inhabit what eventually became Scotland" (page 775)' http://www.ancient.eu/picts/ accessed 3 January 2017.
[18] Page 155, Neil M. Gunn, *Selected Letters*.
[19] https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/25/Blaeu.1654.submap.Ptolemy.Damnij.jpg wikimedia commons accessed 9 January 2017.
[20] Dictionaries arrived later than the earliest of these maps so textual corruption has to be assumed as maps were manually copied.

In William F. Skene's 1836 work *The Highlanders of Scotland*[21] the Ptolemaic tribes are given with a K. Skene has the Kournaovioi occupying 'Strathnaver and Kaithness.' So the occupants of Strathnaver and Caithness were Kourns; the second part of the Ptolemaic tribal name is concerned with Latin pluralisng. The other tribes along from Dunnet Head were Kreons, Karns, and Kairins (in Skene's spelling).

One writer[22] notes of these tribes –

Cerones (or Creones), Carnonacae and Caereni? Ptolemy was probably doing the best he could but that seems to be far too coincidental. What three tribes would sit side by side and calmly tolerate nearly identical names? … Three … likely possibilities present themselves:

- *The three have a common origin as a single tribe. They knew they had a common origin, and didn't mind the similarity in names because they knew they were all one tribe under different rulers.*

- *The area north from Argyll was occupied by one single tribe, not three. Due to variations in pronunciation by everyone involved, Ptolemy misunderstood his data and wrote down the three versions he received as three tribes, not one.*

- *The tribe(s) lived in a region which already had such a name, and adopted it in various pronunciations.*

If one reads Ptolemy and places the tribes on a map you get a series of four, not three, tribes with similar sounding names (south to north up the western coast of Scotland): Cerones/Creones, Carnonacae, Caereni, Cornavii.

So the above is a strong suggestion that the four tribes identified by Ptolemy were really one group spread out over a significant area.

The 1901 *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland* views the 'Cerones, Creones and Carnonacae or Carini' as one tribe[23] who lived from Cape Wrath to Ardnamurchan; it viewed the Cornovii as separate and that they lived along the north coast of Sutherland and Caithness (and possibly the Orkney Islands). If one accepts that text then the Cornavii / Kourns could be viewed as a separate tribal group. Certainly, Professors Rivet and Smith, and others, accept that *'the* Cornavii *evidently occupied Caithness'*.[24]

So what did Cornavii mean? It may have meant *'people of the horn.'*[25] But does horn refer to the shape of the land? Or does horn relate to a god? Or is horn a totemic ethonym based on an animal or bird? The current lack of archaeological support[26] for a religious / mythic base suggests a geographic /

[21] See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=aF6-BgAAQBAJ&pg=PT1&lpg=PT1&dq=The+Highlanders+of+Scotland+By+William+F.+Skene,+D.C.L.+(1836)&source=bl&ots=qfLZrbtz2W&sig=_zcMRmN22OO9wzQ6IfpUJySceB8&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwicwOW3s7XRAhXMIsAKHUaSCcUQ6AEIHzAB#v=onepage&q=ptolemy&f=false accessed 9 January 2017.
[22] http://www.historyfiles.co.uk/FeaturesBritain/RomanCreones01.htm.
[23] http://digital.nls.uk/gazetteers-of-scotland-1803-1901/pageturner.cfm?id=97414066&mode=transcription accessed 2 January 2017.
[24] Page 141, A.L.F. Rivett, Colin Smith, *The Place-names of Roman Britain*.
[25] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornovii accessed 9 January 2017.
[26] Section 1.3 discusses the origin of the word 'Caithness'.

economic origin for Cornavii such as a horn shaped land.[27] But the meaning of Cournavii could also have a different origin – perhaps 'people who, when considered from the sea, lived in a bleak spot with hills and poor beaches' as we do not know whether Cornavii was a name applied to the people living in an area or a name the Cornavii gave to themselves. There is a suggestion that a non-Indo European language existed in a very early period of North-East Scotland; no-one knows what 'Kourn' meant in that language. What matters is that the group of people existed and that the four Ptolemaic tribal names were all not far off the sound of the name Gunn, given dialects, complete language changes and centuries.

So the Kourns were a group of people living in Caithness / Sutherland / Strathnaver in the second century; it is obvious that some of their descendants would continue to live in that area (*'Gunns clung to their inaccessible acres among the hills'*[28]) as we have no record of ethnic cleansing, super plagues or equivalent happening. Kourn appears to be a generic, regional[29] word applied to the native people of Caithness / Sutherland / Strathnaver over many centuries, and which over time became a surname.

SUMMARY It is possible, but not definite, that a proto-Gunn name was in existence by the second century and that the name evolved over many centuries into the surname Gunn.

[27] Horn shaped land is also suggested for the origin of the word Cornwall. As well, the people who lived on the greater Wirral Peninsula were at one point Cornavii and that peninsula also has a horn shape.
[28] Page 43, Ian Grimble, *Chief of Mackay*.
[29] The regional basis for a Scottish surname is not a problem; Murray, for example, is a regional surname for those from Moray. There are many Scottish territorial, topographical and regional surnames. One view is that *'Many of the first permanent (Scottish) surnames are territorial in origin'* see http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/content/help/index.aspx?r=551&560 accessed 8 February 2015. Ogilvie and Abercrombie are also surnames not based on descent from a Clan founder. Nor is Morrison, see page 6, A. W. Morrison, *The Genealogy of the Morrison Origins in Scotland* (2019).

Kildonan 2011

Navidale 2011

1.2 Gunns were Picts then Celts

Picts are assumed to have been the descendants of the Caledonii and other tribes that were mentioned by Roman historians or on the world map of Ptolemy.[30]

Picts 'a nation created by the union of a number of tribes'[31]

the Gunns…from the far north of Scotland, are descended from Pictish tribes…[32]

the word Gunn might be a relic of a pre-Celtic tongue.[33]

Ian Grimble[34] writes '*A typically mysterious tribe of the far north is the one called Gunn. The Gunns inhabited the mountainous area which contains Morven*[35] *and the Scarabens*[36] (being the mountainous inland area of modern Caithness). *To the south the hills descend to a level plain along the Moray Firth, which provided the Norsemen with their accessible Sutherland. But north of the Helmsdale river the east coast consists of huge cliffs, as intimidating as the hill country behind them. The entire area is rich in pre-historic remains, proto-Pictish defensive structures and later Pictish sculpture.... it was exactly the sort of refuge that the old inhabitants were likely to have chosen when invaders arrived ...* (the name) *Gunn might be so old that it belongs to a pre-Celtic language like the name Strathnaver near by, which has been favoured with an unlikely Gaelic meaning. ... What seems most likely is that the Gunns were a Pictish tribe…'* [37]

To restate Grimble - the name *'Gunn might be so old that it belongs to a pre-Celtic language'* which fits well with the central idea of the previous section. Strathnaver is mentioned as Naboros in Ptolemy's map[38] so as the word Strathnaver evolved from Ptolemaic times it is plausible that the name Gunn may also have evolved from that time. Grimble[39] also points out that an alternative name for the Naver river was 'Aodh' meaning Mackay. This river title suggests that the Mackays were a Clan of power and, by implication, Gunns were merely non-linked, unimportant inhabitants of that area.

For Grimble the Gunns were Picts.[40] Pictish symbol stones have been found at Ackergill, Birkle Hill, Sandside, Crosskirk, Latheron, Ulbster, Skinnet, Latheron, Reay[41] and elsewhere; much of this is Gunn territory.[42] It is generally accepted that Picts came from the original inhabitants of northern Scotland[43]

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[30] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Picts accessed 17 March 2017. See also page 5, Lloyd and Jenny Laing, *The Picts and the Scots*.
[31] Page 51, W. A. Cummins *The Age of the Picts*.
[32] Page 64, Gilbert Summers, *Traditions of Scotland.*
[33] Page 87, James Miller *Portrait of Caithness and Sutherland.*
[34] I thank Sir Charles Fraser for pointing out this comment from page 64, G. J. Summers *Traditions of Scotland.*
[35] Morven is the highest mountain in Caithness and lies north of Helmsdale, halfway between Kinbrace and Braemore.
[36] The Scarabens are a range of mountains about four kilometres in length, a little closer to Braemore than Morven and north of Helmsdale and Kildonan.
[37] Page 71, Ian Grimble, *Clans and Chiefs.*
[38] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strathnaver accessed 5 March 2017.
[39] Pages 9-10, Ian Grimble, *Chief of Mackay.*
[40] 'The common people of the (Gunn) clan were undoubtedly Pictish' http://www.swanstrom.org/gunn.html accessed 9 January 2013.
[41] Drawn from page 123, Donald Omand, *The Caithness Book*.
[42] Page 87, John Haywood and Barry Cunliffe, *The Historical Atlas of the Celtic World.*
[43] See http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/picts/ accessed 8 March 2017. Or Wikipedia accessed 8 March 2017 said *'Picts are assumed to have been the descendants of the Caledonii and other tribes that were mentioned … on the world map of Ptolemy'.*

and were separate tribes which combined to tackle the Romans.[44] Picts also *'generally did not favour the coastal zone and also avoided the floors of river valleys'*[45] which matches the traditional Gunn mountainous inland areas. Being a minor Pictish, non-kindred people also offers a strong reason why Gunns do not appear in historical records until late, and why there are no records of ancestral lands.

The Pictish influence died out in the later 800s as '*in 878 AD the Pictish king, Áed, was murdered and replaced by a Gael - Giric. Giric accelerated the Gaelic takeover of Pictish politics during his reign making the Gaelic language and traditions commonplace. Even after Giric was finally deposed in 889 AD future Pictish kings such as Donald and Constantine embraced Gaelic culture. By 900 AD Pictland ceased to exist. The reign of Donald is listed in the* Chronicle of the Kings of Alba *as a king of Alba. Pictland and Dál Riata had gone and in their place Alba - a Gaelic word for Scotland - was created'.*[46]

Pict speaking Gunns over time and generations became Gaelic[47] speaking Celtic Gunns (and some may have been bilingual,[48]) this is shown by place names in Gunn lands. Gaelic place names showing ownership or belonging include those with 'achadh' (meaning field / farm) or 'baile' (home / settlement) and are these are readily found in the traditional Gunn areas around Watten to Halkirk to Westerdale, and also towards the coast around Latheron and Dunbeath.[49] By contrast the Norse 'Dale' - meaning valley - in Gunn areas such as Helmsdale, Westerdale, Navidale, Ousdale, Berriedale etc indicates Norse geographic knowledge but not settlement in an area. Norse settlement is shown in coastal place names ending in 'ster' / 'bster' which indicates a farm or settlement, and 'setter' is Norse for homestead.[50] The key point is that much Gunn territory has place names showing that the Norse did not settle in Gunn areas; the Norse preferred coastal settlement.[51]

Gunn Gaelic speakers were not overrun or absorbed by Norse settlements otherwise Gaelic place names would have disappeared.[52] Professor Nicolaisen says of the ninth to the thirteenth centuries period that the Norse / Celtic divide had a *'clear marked separation of the two spheres of interest.'*[53]

Summary The lands Gunns inhabited were not part of the Norse sphere of influence although obviously some interaction would have occurred; Gunns were most likely Picts then Celts.

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[44] See http://www.clanntuirc.co.uk/JSNS/V9/Broderick%205.pdf accessed 7 August 2016; sections 3.7, 5.4 and 5.8.
[45] Page 155 W.F. H. Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place Names*.
[46] http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/history/articles/kingdom_of_the_picts/ accessed 17 December 2012.
[47] Mark Rugg Gunn writes, page 10, in his *Clan Gunn* that *'The Scots spoke Gaelic, a tongue unintelligible to the Picts, and this language now spread along the paths of missionary endeavour, slowly displacing the Pictish dialects, so that by the time the Norsemen arrived in Scotland it had become the universal language of the people.'* This is questionable. To imply that it was all due to missionary endeavour is not supported by evidence. It is more useful to point out that the Scots of Dal Riata (western Scotland / Northern Ireland) probably absorbed the Pictish kingdom and Christianity was but a part of Dal Riata influence; the language of power and everyday life was Gaelic, not just the Church. The issue is when the Picts 'lost' their language and that's just not clear.
[48] http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf page 84 accessed 10 January 2013.
[49] http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf page 78 including a list of some of the Gaelic origin named places accessed 10 January 2013.
[50] Page 127, Donald Omand, *The Caithness Book.*
[51] Norse *'settlements gradually extended inland from the coastline, but not far, because of Celtic resistance'*. Page 103, A.L. Lieforth, R.J. Munro *The Scottish Invention of America, Democracy and Human Rights.*
[52] In Caithness *'there is not a single surviving or recorded place name of Norse origin, which incorporates an earlier Gaelic element, apart from perhaps* Duncansby*…'* http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf page 79 accessed 10 January 2013.
[53] http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf page 77 accessed 10 January 2013.

1.3 Caithness place name origin; a discussion

Professor Nicolaisen's[54] view[55] is that ancient 'Caithness is primarily a tribal … name'[56] and 'The Norsemen … knew that the Pictish people, who lived in the area of roughly the same extent as modern Caithness and Sutherland were termed 'the Cats' and therefore, probably even before they (*the Norsemen*) ever set foot on the mainland, called the north-easternmost extremity quite appropriately *Katanes* 'headland of the Cats'… The Norsemen *(later)* applied the term *Katanes* 'Caithness'… only to the area settled and governed by themselves…'[57]

To summarise Professor Nicolaisen's key points –

- The use of the term Caithness by the Norse, was in essence restricted to areas specifically under Norse control. For the Norse the rest of the land was 'Southland'[58] progressively settled by 'Gaelic-speaking Scots from Ireland'[59] being the Kingdom of Dál Riada.
- Cait / Cat was not a term used by the tribes of Caithness / Sutherland; it was applied to them, by others.

So, if Cait was a name progressively applied to the tribal people of Norse controlled Caithness by outsiders then we have a possible equivalent with Gunn; that the name which became Gunn (originally Kourn?) was applied to those living outside the Norse controlled Caithness by outsiders and/or by the Caits. I note that Pict is a term applied to the Picts by outsiders[60]; we do not know what the Picts called themselves.

It is not clear what Cait meant. One suggested meaning involves a minor, historically questionable Pictish Kingdom[61] but this is unlikely not least as Cait is a Gaelic term.[62] Another suggestion involves the importance of cats but that lacks archaeological and general historic support; in other words if cats[63] were that important there would be many carvings and such like evidence and there just isn't this strong evidence.[64] In W.A. Cumin's list of symbols on Pictish stones there is, in fact, no mention of

[54] For a detailed life of Professor Nicolaisen see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W._F._H._Nicolaisen.
[55] Prof. Bill Nicolaisen in ed. J. R. Baldwin, *Caithness – A Cultural Crossroads* Edinburgh 1982 Scottish Society for Northern Studies. See http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf for the original chapter.
[56] It is worth noting that at least one view of Clan Chattan gives descent from the Catti; if one Clan could descend from original inhabitants of an area so the Gunns could also descend from such original inhabitants. Pages 1- 5 Macpherson of Dalchully *The Chiefs of Clan MacPherson*.
[57] http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf page 76 accessed 10 January 2013.
[58] http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf page 77 accessed 11 January 2013.
[59] http://ssns.org.uk/resources/Documents/Books/Caithness_1982/05_Nicolaisen_Caithness_1982_pp_75-85.pdf page 77 accessed 10 January 2013.
[60] https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/pict accessed 25 January 2014.
[61] Page 10, Alex Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba 789-1070* details the questionable history.
[62] Pages 19-21, W.A. Cumins, *The Age of the Picts* suggests the underlying truth in the legend is best viewed as assorted (perhaps seven) Pictish tribes unifying together for some reason. There is an Irish version for the origin of the Picts which is, for Cumins, *'neither convincing nor very interesting.'*
[63] And the Shetlands were *Innsi Catt* (Isles of Cats) before the Norse; one would again expect some sort of archaeological evidence in support and there isn't. And one would also expect the Orkneys to have had the same totemic nature but its name origin is not 'cat' but more 'wild boar'. W.P.L. Thomson notes the problem of the lack of animal themes on Pictish sculptures. See Page 4, W.P.L. Thomson, *The New History of Orkney*.
[64] Some minor support can be found on a few Pictish carvings; see Charles Thomas, *Gathering the Fragments*.

any cats.[65] There is a third option. Picts were a warrior race - a stereotyped view is that *'Picts have long been regarded as enigmatic savages who fought off Rome's legions ... wild tribesmen'*[66] and we know Picts were warriors[67] *from at least 297 C.E. The Rev. Mackay points out 'that Old Gaelic cat, modern Gaelic cath ... meant 'war.'*'[68] It is reasonable to assume that a name meaning 'war'[69] - or something close to it - could be applied to the Celts of 'Caithness.' So if the Gaelic origin of Cait was something like 'war' then this links strongly to the Gaelic meaning of the word Gunn which I discuss in the next section. It makes sense - a term applied to the warlike Caits[70] of one area means a similar word could apply to the warlike neighbouring Gunns.

But one needs to be careful - from the time of Ptolemy's map the names recorded for tribes / places / people may just be the closest approximation to the sound heard by non-speakers of Pictish / early Gaelic. In other words, we can invent a meaning from modern Gaelic for tribes / places / people when those terms may not have had that meaning in the original language.

SUMMARY The Caits had their name given to them by outsiders. It is therefore possible that Gunns also had their name given to them by outsiders.

[65] Page 142, W.A. Cumins, *The Age of Picts.*
[66] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/the-truth-about-the-picts-886098.html accessed 18 March 2017.
[67] http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/picts/accessed 17 March 2017.
[68] Page 93 Rev. Angus Mackay, *Sutherland and Caithness in Ancient Geography* see http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-352-1/dissemination/pdf/vol_042/42_079_094.pdf accessed 14 March 2017. He qualifies the statement … *'If our northern name, however had been originally derived from Old Gaelic cat, war, the present form would be the softened Cathaich, but instead of that it is the hard form Cattaich, meaning 'pertaining to cats'.* Now word pronunciation changes over time; modern pronunciation does not automatically invalidate an earlier alternative.
[69] Or 'battle'. Page 566 https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=V89aAAAAcAAJ&pg=PA566&dq=old+gaelic+cat+battle&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjlr8KO_d3SAhXLD8AKHQ2oAfwQ6AEISjAJ#v=onepage&q=old%20gaelic%20cat%20battle&f=false accessed 17 March 2017.
[70] Another suggestion, which seems ignored, is that Cait means 'high or steep' in Gaelic. Page 135, Sir David Dalrymple, *Annals of Scotland from the Accession of Malcolm III Surnamed Canmore to the Accession of Robert 1*.

1.4 So how did these Picts / Celts become Gunns?

Most writers on the annals of the Scottish Highlanders do not reckon them (Gunns) *as among the septs entitled to a full or separate notice at all. It strikes us, however, that they are among the very purest remnants of the Gael...*[71]

Gunn ... from the Gaelic Guinneach signifying sharp, fierce or keen...[72]

The Gaelic gunna seems but a variation of guineach, an arrow or dart, which is derived from guin, a sharp and sudden wound.[73]

The population of Gunn territory at the time the Norse were in Caithness were Picts or Gaelicised Picts. In Thomas Smibert's view -

When the Norse Vikings first attacked Cat and succeeded in conquering the Picts there, they conquered by no means the whole province. They subdued and held only that part of Ness or modern Caithness, which lies next its north and east coasts, and the rest of the seaboard of Ness, Strathnavern and Sudrland, forcing their way up the lower parts of the valleys ... but they never conquered, so as to occupy and hold them, the upper parts of the river basins or the hills above them which remained in possession of Picts and Gaels throughout the whole period of Norse occupation[74]

So Norse control was mainly of bays and borders; a Pictish / Celtic group of non-kindred people who lived in inland, often peat-ridden, inhospitable ancient Caithness – let us call them 'Gunns' – would have been overall left alone by the Norse. And importantly there was no reason for the term Cait to be applied to these 'Gunns' by the powerful Norse as they were not in the Norse areas of occupation as already discussed. One version for the origin of Clan Sutherland has *'that they are descended from the Celtic population who retreated before the Norsemen into the mountainous and inaccessible regions of their district;* '[75] if it's a possible origin for Clan Sutherland it is also a possible origin for the Gunns.

A logical theory for the origin of the name Gunn was also offered by Thomas Smibert[76] -

The (Gunn) *name seems to be Gaelic or Celtic ... The word in the Erse tongue has certain meanings, rendering it not inappropriate as a name for a wild tribe of mountaineers in the old days. As a*

[71] Page 170, ed. Thomas Smibert *The Clans of the Highlands of Scotland; being an account of their Annals, Separately & Collectively with delineations of Their Tartans, and Family Arms*. See Appendix 5 for the complete entry.
[72] Pages 384-385, William Anderson, *The Scottish Nation Volume II*, 1867. The Welsh 'gwyn' is also of interest; it comes from the proto-Brythonic and proto-Celtic (as in, was probably the same language origin as early northern Scotland) with meanings of 'white' and 'blessed' but later meaning including 'ridges' and 'complaints.' So, were original Gunns of fair skin, living on the ridges, who 'complained?'
[73] Page 360, James Logan, *The Scottish Gael; or, Celtic Manners, As Preserved among the Highlanders.*
[74] http://www.scotsites.co.uk/ebooks/sagatimechapter3.htm accessed 18 December 2012.
[75] Page 293 Frank Adam (rev. Sir Thomas Innes of Learney) *The Clans Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*. P.93 J. Haywood, *The Historical Atlas of the Celtic World*, also makes this point about Scandinavian settlement being more 'modern' Caithness and coastal Sutherland, although coastal Sutherland was not intensively settled and was really Pictish land and people.
[76] See Appendix 5.

substantive, guin[77] signifies "fierceness," and also "pain," "a wound," "a sting," "a dart;" while, as a verb, it means "to wound, pierce or sting;" and, as an adjective, framed from the same root it has the sense of "sharp, keen, bitterly malicious." So say Drs Norman Macleod and Daniel Dewar in their Gaelic dictionary. It therefore seems likely that guin[78] was a generic term applied to some of the rudest and most northerly of the Scottish Highlanders in very early times ... In short, we repeat our belief that the name of Gunn had a generic origin, indicating a "fierce" tribe; and that they had been so christened by those around them ... Such native stories as that of 'Gunn the Dane'' cannot stand, in our eyes, against the more common-sense view ... [79]

The idea that the name Gunn was applied to the original inhabitants of the Gunn area in the Scottish Highlands seems reasonable not least as the main alternative fails; see chapter 2 for the insurmountable problems associated with the Orkney / Norse / Viking Gunn origin myth.

Why were they called Gunn? Time has rolled on; we do not know what Korn / Gunn / Guin meant in Ptolemaic or Pictish times but by the Norse time there is logic in the meaning of the Gaelic / Erse links to the word Gunn. One suspects Gunns were not loved by those in Norse controlled areas on the coast who had more settled needs than an inland tribe – perhaps the Gunns raided the coastal villages or responded strongly when their lands were entered by outsiders. A generic, 'nasty' name applied to the Gunns meaning such as 'fierce, sting' by those in the more settled coastal towns would be quite logical. The word Gunn could carry over from previous years but have gained a new meaning.

What adds to this idea of the surname being from Guin is an August 1638 signed document by Donald the Scholar (for his full biography, see chapter 10) who signed the wadset of Kinbrace as *Gune* with the annotation 'in my hand.' It is the earliest known use of the Gunn surname written by a member of the MacHamish / Clan Gunn Chief family. A little later there is a 1652 document signed by Donald's brothers Alexander Gunn of Killernan and of Navidale and co-signed by John Gunn of Borrobol. Alexander signed as '*Gun'* but his brother signed as '*Gūne*'**.** So the earliest known signature is Gune, the next known are Gun and Gūne**.** Gune / Gūne is very close to Smibert's Guin in sound and suggests support for the Guin origin of the Gunn surname. The National Records of Scotland (often abbreviated hereafter to NRS) record Guin, along with Gun as being the equivalent of Gunn in records from at least 1728 to 1800.[80]

But, as mentioned in the previous section this may just be working backward from an earlier non-Celtic / old Gaelic word which sounded like Gunn / Kourn, to a modern Gaelic word which has no link to the original meaning. It is not possible to be definite as to the origin of the word Gunn, what is important is that the name Gunn was applied to the people of the region.

[77] 'Campbells – In Gaelic they are called Clan Guin...' Page V of the Appendix of Col. David Stewart, *Sketches of the Highlanders of Scotland Volume 2.* The idea is also picked up in *Scottish Studies*, Volumes 17-19, page 11. So, Campbells could be seen as a tribal group whose name originally was that which became Gunn. Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*, page 10, quotes the Rev. William Findlater observation that the Campbells and Gunns look the same with 'dark eyes and dark complexion;' certainly not Scandinavian.

[78] The MacLeods of the Assynt Peninsula are associated with the word 'Ginnies' and 'Guinies' pages 21 and page 164 of *The Highlands of Scotland in 1750,* 1896 edition. Modern spelling includes Geanies and Ganies. Make these words singular and you have words very much like Gunn, so suggesting the name of Gunn across all of the Northern Highlands.

[79] Pages 170-171, ed. Thomas Smibert, *The Clans of the Highlands of Scotland*. I note the word 'tribe'…

[80] See, for example, National Records of Scotland (NRS) records CS271/9785, CS271/8973, CS271/ 7810 and CS271/9662 – that record is for 1748 and concerns Alexander Gunn of Badanloch, later of Wester Helmsdale, who was MacHamish / Chief and concerns a Court of Sessions battle with the Factor to the Earl of Sutherland. Alexander's legal battles are explored in his life in chapter 10.

2. The Gunn Orkney Islands / Norse / Viking origin myth

A theory is the more impressive the greater is the simplicity of its premises...[81]

Albert Einstein

People all around the world have an inherent interest in their origins and display great creativity when attempting to explain the present in terms of the past. Although the specific of the origin myths of people change according to circumstance, they tend to reflect several common ideas and concerns. First they are rooted in the deep past to provide a sense of solidarity and historical continuity for people who may be heterogeneous in reality. Second, these myths usually connect their ethnonym with the name of an historic character on the basis of similarity in sound. Third, origin myths seek to raise the prestige of the group by choosing a high-status legendary founder...[82]

Michael Newton

Having discussed why Gunns are usefully considered as a non-kindred – not related - tribe or tribes of northern mainland Scotland one needs to consider the main competing concept namely that Gunns have an Orkney Islands / Viking / Norse[83] origin.

There are two theories concerning this myth –

1. Gunns *'claim descent from Guinn, second son of Olave the Black, King of Man and the Isles.'*[84] This idea is now generally discounted for many reasons not least being that Guinn is not regularly given as a son in various histories. The little evidence for a son Guðrøðr gives him dying without issue.[85]

2. There is the much more commonly argued origin idea that Gunns are Norse from the Orkney Islands.[86] The original Gunn – the eponym - is meant to be Gunni Andresson who lived in the Orkney Islands[87] and who was the grandson of the famous pirate Sweyn Assleifsson. Gunni Andresson was meant to have two sons born about 1200[88] namely Snaekoll and Andreas. Gunns are meant to descend

[81] Paul Arthur, Schilpp (editor). *Autobiographical Notes. A Centennial Edition*. p. 31 (As quoted by Don Howard, John Stachel. *Einstein: The Formative Years, 1879-1909* (Einstein Studies, vol. 8). p. 1. Occam's razor also comes to mind…

[82] Page 55, Michael Newton, *Warriors of the Word: the World of the Scottish Highlanders.* He points out, page 58, that one ancient idea was that the Clan Mackay Chief line had descended from the Pharaohs – that is even more unlikely than the Clan Gunn claim of descent from the Orkney Islands aristocracy.

[83] Given the supposed Orkney Islands / Norse origin of Clan Gunn why are there no Norse place names associated with the Gunns in ancient Caithness? The obvious answer is that Gunns have no Orkney / Norse origin and so will have no Norse place names attached to them. There are many Norse personal names which are place names in Sutherland but none for Gunns, see pages 11 and 12 of Alex MacBain's *Place Names; Highlands & Islands of Scotland.*

[84] Page 224, Frank Adams (rev. by Sir Thomas Innes of Learney) *The Clans Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands.*

[85] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olaf_the_Black#Ancestry accessed 11 February 2016.

[86] Mark Rugg Gunn's view is that 'The Gunns were of Nordo-Celtic descent. Though the main stem was Norse, successive generations of intermarriage with their Celtic neighbours produced a race which was more Celtic than Nordic' Page 9, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn;* he does qualify the comment in later discussion. The Morrison name also suffers from the Norse origin delusion; see page 14 A. W. Morrison *The Genealogy of the Morrison Origins in Scotland.*

[87] For a possible reason why the Orkney origin myth may have started see Appendix 4.

[88] The death date of Gunni's wife's first husband – Lifolf Skalli - is well known as he died at the Battle of Wick in 1198. See chapter CXIII *Orkneyinga Saga*. Gunni's wife was Ragnhild, her mother was Ingrid daughter of Jarl St Ragnvald; they were an important family.

from Gunni Andresson, then Snaekoll; there are insurmountable problems associated with this belief which are discussed in chapter 2.2

A linked, but now generally ignored, version of this story is that Gunns *'according to Calder in his* History of Caithness *... descend from Gunni, a brother of the pirate Sweyne.'*[89] This Gunni *'had children by the Dowager Countess of Atholl ...* (and was) *banished from the Isles (of Orkney)… Sweyne sent Gunni south to* (the Isle of) *Lewis.'*[90] At which point Gunni disappears from the history books.

2.1 The Gunn surname is not of Orkney Islands / Norse / Viking origin

surnames were generally adopted in the 17th century[91]

Lord Lyon Court

The first complication concerning the supposed Gunn Orkney Islands / Norse / Viking origin is the surname Gunn[92].

The problem is that *'Many Scottish surnames originated in patronymics, whereby a son's surname derived from the father's forename, e.g. John Donaldson's son might be Peter Johnson, whose son might be Magnus Peterson, and so on. Patronymics present something of a challenge for the family historian in that the surname changed with each successive generation. This practice died out in Lowland Scotland after the 15th century, as patronymic surnames became permanent family names. It persisted, however, in the Highlands & Islands well into the 18th century…. '*[93]

What this means is simple. Gunni Andresson (born around 1180[94]) who was the supposed founder of the Clan Gunn certainly had Snaekoll Gunnison but Snaekoll's fictional child – I deal with his supposed son in chapter 2.3 - would have had Snaekollson as his surname, and changed surnames would have continued with each generation until the 1600s-1700s. These surnames would not have been Gunn, nor early versions of it. So those who believe in the Gunn Orkney Islands / Norse / Viking origin idea have to explain how the Gunn surname was fixed roughly five or six hundred years *before* everyone else's surnames in the Highlands of Scotland were so fixed and also, therefore, when normal[95] Highland families (similar to the Gunns) were doing something *totally* different to the Gunns with regard to their surnames.

[89] Page 194, R. M. Douglas, *The Scots Book.*
[90] See http://www.fionamsinclair.co.uk/genealogy/isles/EO_28_Harald.htm accessed 7 October 2018.
[91] Page 4 Lyon Court booklet 'Coats of Arms and Crest Badges.' This has common agreement – for example 'Surnames as we understand them did not come into general use in the Highlands until the 17th century'. Page 16, Margaret MacLaren of MacLaren, *The Maclarens*.
[92] A similar problem can be found in Alexander W. Morrison's 'The Ay Mac Hormaid Myth of the Morrisons of Durness.'
[93] From 'Scotlands People' http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/Content/Help/index.aspx?r=551&560 accessed 1 May 2014.
[94] The year is derived from his marriage around the year 1200, see footnote 88.
[95] A few, very elite families had early fixed surnames; families with descent from Norman invaders or from the Lord of the Isles being the main examples. These families are massively detailed in history texts. Gunns are not descended from the Normans, nor from the Lord of the Isles and nor are they massively detailed in history texts so should not have a surname at an early time.

Some might argue that the Gunns did not have the surname continuously since 1200 rather Gunns decided to have a surname based on Gunni Andresson some time after his death. That's not logical - why choose Gunni Andresson to be the foundation person of a Clan? Gunni Andresson is anonymous; there are no stories about him. All he did was marry well. But Gunni's grandfather 'pirate' Sweyne Assleifsson was the sort of person from whom Clans could easily originate. But Gunns are not Sweynesson / Swanson, they are Gunns. Certainly *'some clans take their name not from the founder of a clan but from a later descendant who substantially improved the clan's position or was a great hero, or was an outstanding figure in one way or another'*[96] but this is demonstrably not true about Gunni Andresson who was, as already said, invisible in history. And, given that surnames were not fixed until say the 1600s when was the name Gunn chosen? After all, Coroner Gunn was alive before the 1450s…

The idea that Gunn is derived from Gunni Andresson goes totally against historical understanding of surnames in Scotland and, as such, there go Gunn links to the Orkney Islands and Norway.

SUMMARY If you accept the Orkney Islands origin myth[97] you have to accept an impossibility about the surname Gunn. Gunn as a tribal / group name, however, explains why the name Gunn was around from before the 1450s when Coroner Gunn was alive. This tribal / group name later evolved into the surname Gunn.

[96] Page 16, Margaret MacLaren of MacLaren, *The Maclarens*.

[97] For a similar problem applied to Clan Morrison see 'Chapter 4 The Clan Morrison Hoax of the Norse Origin on Lewis and Harris' A. W. Morrison *The Genealogy of the Morrison Origin in Scotland.* When checking various DNA sites on the internet such as https://www.familytreedna.com/public/Gunn?iframe=yresults accessed 31 October 2019 the marked shortage of I-M253 / Norse type Y chromosomes on those with the surname Gunn is noticeable. There is a strong Pictish DNA on Gunn occupied land. See https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-general/scots-dna-0012530 accessed 31 October 2019.

2.2 The supposed Gunn Chief Snaekoll Gunnison did not have children problem

Snaekollr Gunnison … went to Bergen (Norway) *in 1232 …*
but never seems to have come home again.[98]

Barbara Crawford[99]

Despite his part in the murder of the earl Snaekoll was not condemned to death at the trial in Bergen but "remained long with earl Skuli and King Hacon" and there is no evidence that he ever returned to Orkney or Caithness (then footnoted) *'Despite the claims of Clan Gunn to be descended from him.'* [100]

Barbara Crawford

With Snaekoll, the line of Erland became extinct.'[101]

The generally accepted first Gunns by those who support the Orkney Islands / Norse / Viking origin myth are[102] -

- Hrolf
- Olaf Hrolfson c.1100-c.1136
- Sweyn Assleifsson c.1130-c.1171 (Unusually the surname starts with his mother's first name.)
- Andres Sweynson
- Gunni Andresson c.1180 (As said, the supposed first Gunn...)
- Snaekoll Gunnison c.1200-1239/1240
- Ottar Snaekollson
- The 'Clan Gunn Chief' line[103] (*somehow*)

I have no problem with the descent from Hrolf to Snaekoll Gunnison; the *Orkneyinga Saga*[104] supports it.

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[98] Page 8, B. E. Crawford 'Medieval Strathnaver' in ed. John R. Baldwin *The Province of Strathanaver*.

[99] 'Dr Barbara Crawford M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S.E., F.S.A., F.S.A. Scot., Member of the Norwegian Academy **…** Honorary Reader in History at the University of St. Andrews … Dr. Crawford is a Member of the Norwegian Academy and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. She was a Commissioner of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland from 1991-2001, chaired The Treasure Trove Advisory Panel for Scotland from 1993-2001, and was President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland from 2008-2011. She was awarded an OBE in 2011 for services to history and archaeology, and has recently been awarded an Honorary Professorship at the University of the Highlands and Islands….' From https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/staff/barbaracrawford.html accessed 14 March 2016. If one of the most important academics in Scottish Highland history cannot find support for the return of Snaekoll to the Orkney Islands or Caithness then he did not return.

[100] http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/handle/10023/2723 accessed14 March 2016; page 8.

[101] Page 186 *Old-lore Miscellany of Orkney, Shetland, Caithness, and Sutherland, Volume 10, Parts 3-5.*

[102] Drawn from p.24 Mark Rugg Gunn's, *Clan Gunn* being in the nature of an official history given it is on the 'Clan Gunn Society of North America' website http://www.clangunn.us/storekeepernotes.htm accessed 31 December 2012; the UK Society seemingly does not have a web-based store http://www.clangunnsociety.org/ accessed 31 December 2012 but Mark Rugg Gunn was a long-time member of that society.

[103] It's worth noting the *'People of Medieval Scotland' 1093-1314* website http://www.poms.ac.uk/ supports the complete non-existence of the Gunn Chief line in Caithness and Scotland before 1314 as historical records do not exist for them.

[104] Snaekoll Gunnison was extremely well known; to kill an Earl / Jarl, claim Jarldoms and such like would have had the people of Orkney Islands and Caithness talking about you and that is why he is in the *Orkneyinga Saga* (which is the later summary of the history / news). And that is also why it is important what isn't said about him in the *Orkneyinga Saga* as he was too important – and newsworthy - a person

The problem for the myth believers[105] is that Snaekoll Gunnison[106] never married, nor had children (the identification of his son Ottar is just wrong as is discussed in chapter 2.3), nor did Snaekoll return to Scotland from Norway where he had been in exile imposed by the Norwegian King. He most likely died in Norway after being a major participant in a failed rebellion against the King.

Snaekoll Gunnison 1200 - 1239/1240; a life

Snaekoll Gunnison was a seriously unpleasant character.

Snaekoll was born into an aristocratic Orkney family due to his mother's importance – it was her family which had the money and connections, not Gunni Andresson. He was *'proud of his high birth, and ambitious to obtain wealth.'*[107] He argued with Earl / Jarl John (the King of Norway's delegated ruler for the Orkney Islands and Caithness) that he – Snaekoll - should have his great-grandfather (on his mother's side) St Rognvald's share[108] of the Orkney Islands.[109] After the argument with the Earl / Jarl, Snaekoll fled to Hanef for protection - Hanef was the King of Norway's administrative representative on Orkney, he collected taxes amongst his other activities. Both Snaekoll and Hanef later went to Thurso where Snaekoll murdered the Earl / Jarl[110] and others,[111] Hanef was also involved. Obviously aware of the consequent problems to come, as killing the Norwegian King's representative is not a sensible move, Snaekoll, Hanef and their associates fled to the Orkney Islands to a castle on the island of Wyre.

A long siege ensured solved with both Snaekoll and Earl / Jarl John's sides going to King Haakon IV of Norway for 'advice' in 1232[112] who was '*disposed to give a patient audience to the Earl's friends, but so enraged at the cruelty of the murderers, that he put some of them to death.'*[113] Snaekoll and

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to ignore; with him it is legitimate to infer events didn't happen if they are not mentioned. The *Orkneyinga Saga* is considered very reliable on the later years which included Snaekoll. See also page 277, Alex Woolf *From Pictland to Alba 789-1070.*

[105] The myth continues in Diana J Muir's (2018?) *The House of Gunn* where she constructed a massive set of Scandinavian ancestors for Gunns based on the fantasy that Snaekoll Gunn started the Gunn Chief line. Her work lacks any evidence to support that claim. Another of her works is *The Lost Templar Journals of Prince Harry Sinclair Book 1 1353-1395* - the Gunn Westford Knight myth is exposed as fiction in chapter 5 but here is 'fact' supposedly written by her ancestor. Diana Muir's work should be ignored.

[106] One of the many Gunn myths concerns Johanna of Strathnaver - *'When Snaekoll went to Norway there was some evidence that he left behind him an infant daughter named Johanna who in the course of time would be heiress to the Moddan estates and parts of Caithness. As Johanna of Strathnaver...'* page 30, Mark Rugg Gunn, *History of the Clan Gunn*. See, as well, http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=m-RBAAAAcAAJ&pg=PA709&dq=Johanna+of+strathnaver&hl=en&sa=X&ei=vpXUUPPuFOi30QWj1YHABw&ved=0CDwQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=Johanna%20of%20strathnaver&f=false for discussion of Johanna being a Gunn accessed 30 December 2012. The main problem with this idea is that there is no primary source evidence to support it and Snaekoll's marriage and child would have been mentioned in the *Orkneyinga Saga* which details Snaekoll's life in detail when he was on the Orkney Islands – and it isn't so mentioned. Mark Rugg Gunn's book does not state his evidence. The marriage is also not mentioned in key texts of the area such as Barbara E. Crawford *The Northern Kingdoms; Orkney and Caithness from AD 870 to 1470*.

[107] Page 181, George Barry, *The History of the Orkney Islands; in which is comprehended an account of their present as well as their ancient state; together with the advantages they possess for several branches of industry, and the means by which they might be improved.*

[108] St. Rognvald was also known as Rognvald Kali Kolsson. *'Snaekoll ... Gunnison* (had) *estates in Orkney that he laid claim to and it was the Orkney Earldom which Earl John feared he was going to take from him'* Page 159-160, B. E. Crawford, *The Earls of Orkney-Caithness and their relations with Norway and Scotland: 1158-1470.*

[109] See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mormaer_of_Caithness Was he trying to be Mormaer of Caithness given Harald the Younger was a Mormaer?

[110] Page 275 Barbara Crawford, *The Northern Earldoms Orkney and Caithness from AD 870 to 1470.*

[111] Snaekoll also killed *'other members of the earl's (group)'* Page 275, Barbara E. Crawford *ibid.*

[112] Page 8, B. E. Crawford ' Medieval Strathnaver' in John R. Baldwin ed., *The Province of Strathnaver.*

[113] Page 181 George Barry, *The History of the Orkney Islands.*

Hanef, perhaps due to their aristocratic connections, were not executed. The *'best men of the islands'*[114] were allowed to return to Scotland but these men drowned on the return trip.

Snaekoll was certainly not one of the *'best men'* of the Orkney Islands. He was in disgrace; he *'was imprisoned in the Royal castle of Bergen … he was released into the guardianship of the King's father-in-law Skuli Bardarson. Duke Skuli*[115] *plotted to take the throne from Hakon and with Snaekoll … went north*[116] *and reformed the Wolfcloaks (Varbelgs) warband. Snaekoll was made a captain or steward of the Wolfcloaks.'*[117] The rebellion started against King Haakon IV on 6 November 1239, about seven years after Snaekoll's arrival in Norway.

The Norwegian *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*[118] is the main source of Norwegian history for this period. Section 208 details the end of Snaekoll. It says, in a simple translation,[119] that

King Håkon sent some leaders north against the varbelgs (Wolfcloaks), *that was Gunnar the King´s friend, Peter from Giske and Åsulv the farmer, they had 25 ships … When they came to Borgund (Sunnmøre near Ålesund) they met Olav Kåbein, Snekoll* (Snaekoll Gunnison) *and Andres Skjæla. Some of the "varbelgs" men were killed* (no names) *and the others got "grid".*

In other words, King Haakon's men defeated Skuli's supporters who included 'Snekoll'. Snaekoll was obviously a significant rebel as he was listed by name – three leaders are given from King Haakon's side, three leaders are from the rebel side. Some rebels were killed and some were 'grid'. 'Grid' means 'freed'. Some, surely, died of wounds.

But this *Saga* is the official history with the sub-text of showing King Haakon as heroic and glorious. If Snaekoll did not die in the battle or soon after then it's vaguely possible he may have been freed[120] but was not given Scottish land[121] nor any wealth as that would all have been mentioned in the *Saga* to show that Haakon was generous and such mention is not in the *Saga*. Equally it's logical that Snaekoll wouldn't be given lands and wealth. Why would a King reward a senior rebel, especially one already in disgrace and lucky to be alive given he had already killed an Earl / Jarl on the King's side? That would

[114] Page 275-279 B. E. Crawford, *The Northern Earldoms.*
[115] *'Snekoll was long afterwards with earl Skuli and Hacon'* Page 158, *George Webbe Dissant, Icelandic Saga and other Historical Documents relating to the settlements and descent of the Northmen of the British Isles Volume 4*.
[116] *''Earl Skuli went north to Drontheim (Trondheim) in the autumn, and these with him Hanef, and Kolbein, and Snaekoll. '* Page 158. *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Ævi Scriptores: Or, Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland During the Middle Ages, Issue 88, Vol 4.*
[117] See http://www.caithness.org/caithness/castles/freswick/ accessed 5 February 2013.
[118] *The Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar* (*The Saga of Haakon Haakonarson*) is an Old Norse kings' sagas, telling the story of the life and reign of King Haakon Haakonarson of Norway. The saga was written by the Icelandic historian and chieftain Sturla Þórðarson, in the 1260s. Sturla was at the court of Haakon's son Magnus when he learned of his father's death, and he is said to have immediately commissioned Sturla to write his father's saga. It is the main source to Norwegian history for the period of 1217 (Haakon's accession) to his death in 1263. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%C3%A1konar_saga_H%C3%A1konarsonar accessed 30 January 2019.
[119] The original reads - Kong Håkon sendte noen sveitehøvdinger nordover mot vårbelgene, det var Gunnar kongsfrende, Peter fra Giske og Åsulv bonde, de hadde 25 skip. Før de seilte fra byen, talte han til dem og sa at de skulle seile så langt nordover som det var trygt. Han sa at de skulle holde kirkefreden og kvinnefreden, slik som alt hans forfedre før ham hadde gjort. Så tok de av sted, og da de kom til Borgund, var vårbelgenes sysselmann der, det var Olav Kåbein, Snekoll og Andres Skjæla. Det falt noen mann av vårbelgene før de kunne komme seg i kirken. Birkebeinene tok leidangen som de hadde samlet, men mennene fikk grid for å møte kongen…. Peter og hans menn fikk greie på at det ikke var flere vårbelger på vei nordfra, men at hertugen satt med mange menn i Nidaros, så at det ikke var trygt å komme der. De snudde da og seilte sørover tilbake til Bergen med det gods og de menn de hadde tatt....
[120] I suspect the only varbelgs freed were unimportant men, probably forcibly drafted onto the varlberg side.
[121] There is no logic for Snaekoll to go to mainland Scotland; his connections were with the Orkney Islands.

encourage another rebellion. Logic dictates the three rebel leaders mentioned died fighting as they knew what would happen to them; leaders of failed rebellions do not live, especially in the 1200s. Note that Haakon *'crushed'*[122] the previously mentioned leader of this rebellion, Skuli, *'and his closest men;'*[123] they did not live. Given King Haakon did not show mercy to Skuli Bardarson who was his father-in-law why would he show mercy to the failed rebel Snaekoll and reward him with lands and wealth as is required by Gunn myths? It's not conceivable that he would do so.

Consider, as well, what happened to the renowned, well-born Icelandic poet and historian Snorri Sturluson.[124] Snorri Sturlsson supported – but did not take part in - Duke Skuli's rebellion and was, in consequence, put to death by the King's emissary in Iceland in 1241. This execution of Snorri Sturluson shows again how unlikely it would have been for King Haakon to have pardoned and rewarded Snaekoll and allowed him to go back to Scotland. King Haakon was not that sort of person.

After 1239, or perhaps 1240, it is legitimate to assume that Snaekoll was dead and that he died in Norway as there is no reference to him in any *Saga* after this time.

Michael J. Gunn points out that 'Snaekol was certainly dead by 1242 in which year his younger brother, Andrs, confirms a charter of the family lands of Håland, near Stavanger fjord in Norway to the Monastery of St. Michael the Archangel (Munkaliv) at Bergen.'[125]

SUMMARY The *Orkneyinga Saga* records Snaekoll's life and times in detail; there is no mention of marriage nor children for Snaekoll in the *Orkneyinga Saga*. The Norwegian *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar* also details Snaekoll's life, especially in Norway. Neither marriage nor children are mentioned in that *Saga*, either, and such events and people would have been mentioned as Snaekoll was too important – and well known - to ignore. There is also no mention of Snaekoll's return to Scotland[126] in these texts and it's just not plausible that King Haakon would have pardoned and rewarded a major rebel - and if he had it would be mentioned in his *Saga*.

There is absolutely no support for the idea that Snaekoll married, had children, and returned to Scotland; there are many, many reasons to suggest Snaekoll died unmarried in Norway. He was never Clan Gunn.

[122] Page 295, R. K. Emmerson (ed), *Key Figures in Medieval Europe; An Encyclopedia.*
[123] http://nbl.snl.no/Skule_B%C3%A5rdsson accessed 8 October 2018.
[124] Page xiv, Lee M. Holder (ed.) of Snorri Sturlsuson's *Heimskringla*.
[125] Page 19, Michael J. Gunn, *The Crowners of Caithness*.
[126] Page 34 Mark Rugg Gunn, *The Gunns*. There is an absurd story that a Gunn (presumably Snaekoll or his supposed son Ottar) married the King of Norway's daughter but the Gunn was already married so when the boat bringing her to Scotland was due, the Gunn organized for the ship carrying her to be wrecked. The story does not appear in any Scandinavian history which it presumably would do so as it concerned a royal so it is just another myth, perhaps loosely using the history of the death of the Maid of Norway in 1290 – she was a Norwegian princess recognized as Queen of the Scots but who died in the Orkney Islands on the way to mainland Scotland. The subject matter was well known by the 15th century in the Highlands – see Ian Grimble *Chief of Mackay* Page 21. This story is discussed more fully in chapter 8.5.

2.3 The supposed 'Gunn Chief Ottar Snaekollson' was not a Gunn problem

2.3.1 Introduction

The traditional view of 'Chief Ottar Snaekollson Gunn' is put forward by Mark Rugg Gunn;

Ottar is mentioned twice in Eirspennill's Hakon Hakon's Son's Saga.[127] *The first occasion is when he visited Norway. 'After that King Hakon went to Bergen. There Gillechrist and Ottar, Snaekoll's son, and many Hebrideans, came to meet him there from the west beyond the sea and they had many letters concerning the needs of their lands. It is not at all clear what lands Ottar held, or his relationship to the King of Norway. Snaekoll had retired to Caithness to lands outside the King's immediate jurisdiction, and it is possible that Ottar was attempting to claim some of Snaekoll's former property'.*[128]

And

(Starting with Olaf the Black, King of Man) '*Olaf remained for four nights in the town* (Bergen) before *he went west. Olaf went in the ship with Paul Baki's son, to the Orkneys; and then Earl John gave him the ship that was called the Ox. They had from Orkney twenty ships. And when Balki the young, Paul's son and Ottar Snaekollr learned that, they went before south to Skye*.'[129]

The myth believers accept that this Ottar is being Snaekoll Gunnisson's son[130] as then the huge problems associated with the lack of evidence for Snaekoll returning to Scotland, the lack of record of his marriage or his having children can be ignored as if there was a son such events must have happened. The first problem with this supposed proof, which is shared by others,[131] is that it relies on the assumption that only one person can be called Ottar Snaekollson at one time. That's a faulty assumption.

[127] More accurately, *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar.*
[128] Pages 31-32, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[129] Page 23, quoted in Mark Rugg Gunn *ibid.*
[130] 'The most reliable authority yet found on early Gunn family records is an original family tree, prepared in 1893 by Mr Alex. Gunn of Braemore (it should be Braehour and 1896) ... Then he gives us two sons, Snakulus, dated 1224, and does not list the name of the second son... Sanekol, or Snakolus, as it is spelled both ways in the original chart, is followed in the line by Ottor or Ottow Gunn....' Pages 35-37 Robert R, Gunn *The Gunns*.
[131] For example, 'The male line of the Gunns, according to a pedigree which the writer has seen, was continued after his flight by Snaekoll, who, it is stated had a son, Ottar,' Pages 56, James Gray, S*utherland and Caithness in Saga-time or The Jarls and the Freskyns*.

2.3.2 Ottar Snaekollson was not Snaekoll Gunnison's son

R. Andrew McDonald in *The Kingdom of The Isles Scotland's Western Seaboard c 1100-c.1336*[132] agrees with the quotation provided by Mark Rugg Gunn but provides a time; 1224.[133] *'As early as 1224,* Hakon's Saga *relates how, while King Hakon was in Bergen, Gilliecrist and Ottar, Snaekoll's son, and many Hebrideans, came to meet him there from west beyond the sea; and they had many letters concerning the needs of their lands'*[134] and Macdonald continues ''*the* (Hebridean) *emissaries may have gone to Norway as a result of the perception on the part of the Islesmen that King Alexander of Scotland, after his campaign in Scotland in 1221 or 1222, was preparing a follow-up campaign against the Hebrides. Or they may have been responding to the increased unrest in the Isles.'*[135]

1224 is crucial as we know when Ottar's supposed father Snaekoll was born – about 1200.[136] It is absurd to believe that Ottar Snaekollson was in Bergen aged about four - which he had to be if Snaekoll Gunnison was his father - to discuss issues with the King of Norway, especially given his supposed father Snaekoll was well-known and ambitious; Snaekoll would have been in Norway to meet the King as he had not yet killed Earl / Jarl John. Obviously, the person identified as Ottar Snaekollson in Bergen has nothing to do with the Snaekoll of the preceding section.

The Ottar Snaekollsson who went to Bergen was a Sudreyan Chief who later became Chief of the MacNichols[137] on Skye, and was at Finlaggan on Islay in 1240. (The Sudreys mean the Hebrides and sometimes the Isle of Man.[138]) There is accepted history for Ottar Snaekollson in a major role[139]

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[132] *Scottish Historical Review Monograph 4*, Tuckwell Press, Scotland, 1998.

[133] '*In 1224 representatives from the islands were in Bergen to ask King Hakon Hakonsson for assistance and settle disputes between them...* 'Page 48, Randi Bjorrshol Waerdahl, *The Incorporation and Integration of the King's Tributary Lands into the Norwegian Realm c 1195-1397*.

[134] Page 88, R. Andrew McDonald, *The Kingdom of the Isles Scotland's Western Seaboard c. 1100 – c. 1336.*

[135] Pages 88-89 R. Andrew McDonald, *ibid.*

[136] '*Snaekoll's date can be ascertained with some accuracy as his mother's first husband, Lifolf Baldpate, died in 1198 at the battle of Clairdon, so she can hardly have married Snaekoll's father, Gunni, much before 1199. From these dates Snaekol could have been born by 1200 or so.*' http://southerlandweb.blogspot.co.uk/2010/01/on-lairds-of-duffus.html accessed 30 December 2012

[137] http://www.houseofnames.com/McNichols-history/?A=54323-523 accessed 29 December 2012.

[138] The Norwegian diocese of Sodor was formed in 1154 covering the Hebrides and the other islands along the west coast of Scotland. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese_of_Sodor_and_Man accessed 28 December 2012. Page 130, Gareth Williams *'These People were high-born and thought a lot about themselves'*: the Family of Moddan of Dale in ed. B.B. Smith, S. Taylor, G. Williams *West over Sea: Studies in Scandinavian Sea-Borne Expansion and Settlement Before 1300* which includes Ottar Jarl of Thurso and other related Ottars. Was one (or more) of these Ottars blurred into the non-existent Gunn Snaekoll's son by the nineteenth century and from this came the Gunn mythic non-link to the Moddan / Johanna of Strathnaver being Snaekoll's daughter?

[139] *After the death of Reginald, Olave deemed it politic to pay a visit to the Court of Norway at Bergen, to do homage to his superior, and to seek help against the growing power of Allan of Galloway. He was well received by Hakon, and entertained right royally. Evidently affairs in the Hebrides were getting into a critical state. According to the account which has been preserved of Olave's mission to Bergen, he informed his Royal master that the lord of Galloway had openly avowed his intention, not only of subduing the whole of the Hebrides, but of attacking Norway herself. At the Norwegian Court, Olave found three Sudreyan chiefs described as "kings" who, having failed to pay tribute to Hakon for their possessions in the Hebrides, had apparently been summoned to his Court to answer for their contumacy. These were Dugall Scrag or Shrill- voice, and Duncan (sons of Dugall, son of Somerled the Great), and Somerled their cousin, son of Gillecolum who was killed during his father's attempted conquest of Scotland. The submission of the Sudreyan chiefs appears to have come too late, for Hakon had already appointed one Uspak whom he honoured by conferring his own name upon him to act as his Viceroy in the Sudreys, and the disappointed Somerledians had to return home empty-handed. But they were not prepared to submit tamely to being ousted by Uspak-Hakon, and they resolved to fight. Anticipating their resentment and their resistance, the King of Norway got ready a powerful fleet to enforce the rule of his favourite. Olave the Black was commanded to co-operate with Uspak, and with that object, sailed from Norway with Paul Balkasson, who had probably accompanied him to the Norwegian Court. Reinforcements were obtained in the Orkneys, and probably also in the Nordereys, and the combined fleets, under the joint command of Uspak and Olave, proceeded to the Sudreys to attack the trio of Somerledians who awaited them in the Sound of Islay. In the meantime, Balka, a son of Balkasson, and a loyal Sudreyan chief named Ottar Snaekollsson (Snowball) went to Skye, where they attacked a Lewis chief named Torquil, son of Tormod (Munch calls him " Torquil MacDermot "), and killed him with two of his sons. The third son, Tormod, managed to escape by jumping into a cask floating in the water, which drifted across to the mainland, whence he reached Lewis in safety.'* Being from pages 36-37. W. C. Mackenzie *History of the Outer Hebrides.*

around 1230 and it concerned Isle of Man events and the King of Norway. Other people in the accepted history confirm the time; Olav (Olaf) the Black who died 1237[140] and was King of the Isle of Man and part of the Hebrides, Allan of Galloway[141] who died 1234 and Paul Balkasson 'son of Boke or Bakki, who was for a time Sherriff of Skye under the King of Norway in 1223.'[142] Olaf the Black and Paul Balkasson are also mentioned in the 1224 *Saga* extract used by Mark Rugg Gunn; this provides further support for the *'loyal Sudreyan chief named Ottar Snaekollsson'*[143] being the person who also visited Norway in 1224.

There were also suitable Hebridean Gillecrists / Gilchrists alive around 1224 to accompany Ottar Snaekollsson. The choices were probably either Gilchrist Maclachlan who was Chief of the Maclachlans[144] in 1230, for a full discussion of Gilchrist Maclachlan see W.D.H. Sellar's 'Family Origins in Cowal and Knapdale.'[145] Alternatively there was Gilchrist, son of Muirchertach / M'Ercher known 1228.[146]

But the year is 1224 so could Gillecrist be a northern Scot? Important Gillecrists of North Scotland are not visible. Snaekoll Gunnisson was of a high social status, so Gilliecrist should also be. Gillecrist, Earl of Angus was dead by 1206 (he had married one of Snaekoll Gunnissson's aunts and so would have been ideal if Ottar had been Snaekol Gunnison's son). Gilcrist, Mormaer of Mar died c. 1203. No other Gillecrists from this time from North Scotland are known to the author.

SUMMARY The Ottar Snaekollson identified by Gunn mythology as the son of Snaekoll Gunnisson is an impossibility[147] on age grounds and as Ottar was actually a Sudreyan Chief from the Hebrides. This further proves that Gunns have no Chief origin links to the Orkney Islands.[148]

[140] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olaf_the_Black accessed 28 December 2012.
[141] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_of_Galloway accessed 28 December 2012.
[142] Page 247, *Place names of Skye and adjacent islands*, Alexander Robert Forbes.
[143] See Page 181 of Thormudus Torfaeus, *Ancient History of Orkney, Caithness & the North*, translated, with copious notes by the Rev. Alexander Pope, Ottar is clearly mentioned; *'Paul Baikie, Ottar and Sudbollus, sailed south from the Isle of Skye.'*
[144] http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/m/maclach2.html accessed 30 December 2012.
[145] Scottish Studies, Volume 15.
[146] PoMS, no. 1508 (http://db.poms.ac.uk/record/person/1508/; accessed 30 December 2012 and http://www.douglashistory.co.uk/famgen/getperson.php?personID=I269159&tree=tree1 'The Douglas Archives' accessed 29 December 2012.
[147] And with it goes Gunn links to Christian Saints, Viking aristocracy and Scottish Mormaers. Mythic Gunn history has a very snobbish panoply.
[148] *'The Rev. William Findlater, the minister of Durness, has in 1834 a peculiar observation – (Gunns have) … 'dark eyes and dark complexion''.* Page 10 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns.*

3. On the mythical Gunn Chiefs from Ottar Snaekollson to Coroner Gunn

The … line of (the supposed early Gunn Chiefs) *descent is very shadowy …*[149]
Mark Rugg Gunn

There are various versions of the names, years and sequences of the supposed Gunn Chiefs between Ottar and Coroner Gunn; at one point I had six competing descent lines. This is in itself unusual as Clans normally have a clear sequence for the Chief line.

Mark Rugg Gunn used the New Hebrides[150] 'Gunn Chief' line, a Family Tree only issued post 1916.

1. Snaekoll,
2. Ottar,
3. James de Gun,
4. Ingram,
5. Sir Donald Gun of Clyth and Ulbster,
6. Sir James Gun of Clyth and Ulbster,
7. 'George' the Crowner

He noted the Rev. Alexander Gunn of Watten omitted James de Gun from his Gunn Chief line.[151]

The insurmountable problems with the first two Chiefs mentioned, namely Snaekoll Gunnison and Ottar Snaekollson, have already been discussed in chapter 2; they were not Gunns. Problems of a similar magnitude exist for the other Chiefs before Coroner Gunn (often wrongly called Crowner Gunn – see chapter 8). Coroner Gunn existed.

The supposed Clan Gunn Chiefs onwards from Ottar were –

[149] Page 35, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[150] Page 35, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*. Charles Mosley, editor, *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage & Knightage, 107th edition, 3 volumes* (Wilmington, Delaware, U.S.A.: Burke's Peerage (Genealogical Books) Ltd, 2003, volume 2, page 1705. Hereafter cited as *Burke's Peerage* offers a different descent but shares three of the Chiefs.
[151] There are a suggested seven generations from Snaekoll born 1200 to Coroner Gunn born about 1410; this required each generation to be born about thirty-five years after the previous generation which seems a remarkably big year gap especially in the days before contraception. If this was accurate – which it isn't – generations are missing.

3.1 James De Gun / de Gunn (or Jakop / James Gunn)

Primary source proof for James De Gun[152] is missing.

The first problem with James De Gun (and the other Chiefs) is the patronymic surname already discussed in chapter 2.1. To briefly restate –

'Many Scottish surnames originated in patronymics, whereby a son's surname derived from the father's forename, e.g. John Donaldson's son might be Peter Johnson, whose son might be Magnus Peterson, and so on. Patronymics present something of a challenge for the family historian in that the surname changed with each successive generation. This practice died out in Lowland Scotland after the 15th century, as patronymic surnames became permanent family names. It persisted, however, in the Highlands & Islands well into the 18th century…. '[153]

Now, given Snaekoll's birth around 1200 this meant his supposed son Ottar ought to have been born say 1220-1230 which means a James De Gunn (if he existed) was born around 1250-1260. It seems extremely unlikely that a normal family in the Scottish Highlands would have a fixed surname[154] hundreds of years before the rest of the Scottish Highlands had fixed surnames. Lord Lyon's position is that Scottish *'surnames were generally adopted in the 17th century'*[155] so the supposed surname De Gunn occurred at the earliest four hundred years before surnames were generally adopted by Scotland. That is impossible.

And consider 'De Gunn'[156] with its powerful, aristocratic Norman invader connotations, if somehow Gunns had become De Gunn, then De Gunn would have been how the name stayed but that is not what happened. And why and how would a Norman addition be applied to the word Gunn? If somehow Gunns married into a Norman family then Gunns would have taken on the whole Norman surname as the Normans had the money and the power.

There is a suggestion[157] that James De Gun was really a Jakop / James Gunn / Gunn Jameson. These options are marginally better as they lose the Norman problem of De Gun and Jakob is a valid Norwegian translation for James. But the issue of a fixed surname when they were not adopted by the rest of Scotland remains a major issue. And Jakob / James Gun suffers from the same key problem of James De Gunn; there is no evidence of his life, parents or children.

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[152] The only 'de Gunn' I have found anywhere is a British Engineer mentioned in Pepys 'Diary', see also page 438, Granville Penn, *Memorials of the Professional Life and Times of Sir William Penn, Knt. Admiral and General of the Fleet during the interregnum; Admiral and Commissioner of the Admiralty and Navy, After the Restoration from 1644-1670.* Page 21, Michael J. Gunn *The Crowners of Caithness* says 'I have been unable to find any notice of such a person in the records.'

[153] From 'Scotlands People' http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/Content/Help/index.aspx?r=551&560 accessed 1 May 2014.

[154] As mentioned in chapter 2.1 a few, very elite families had early, fixed surnames and these families fill the history books; for example, the Lords of the Isles. Gunns were nowhere near that social league.

[155] Court of the Lord Lyon, 'Coat of Arms and Crest Badges' 2013 booklet. Even in 1652 the name Gunn was not fixed; Gun and Gune / Gune / Gunes were used by Alexander Gunn (MacHamish). See chapter 1.4.

[156] All sorts of Norman surnames begin with 'De' – see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_Lucy for an example.

[157] Page 1705, *Burke's Peerage.*

3.2 Ingram Gunn

After one or other of the James we are meant to have Ingram, or Sir Donald Gunn of Clyth and Ulbster (see 4.3) if you support the Watten Tree. Mark Rugg Gunn's sole proof for the existence of Chief Ingram Gunn is that he 'witnessed a Charter in the time of David II (1329-1370).'[158]

The Ingeram de Gynis who was the said witness was cousin of King Alexander III of Scotland and was actually Enguerrand de Guines, later Lord of Coucy. He was also witness to letters of King Alexander III c. 1285 which were later mentioned in an Inspection of King David II in 1369.[159] *'Enguerrand de Guines, went to Scotland to make his fortune under his cousin, Alexander III. The king arranged his marriage to Christiana de Lindsay, daughter of William de Lindsay of Lamberton and a niece of John de Bailleul* (a future King of Scotland). *She was the heiress to the Barony of Durisdeer and Enoch in Galloway and held lands in southern Scotland and in England at Kendal in Westmoreland. Their marriage and his kinship to the king catapulted his career and included him in the core of the Scottish court….'*[160] It makes sense – a King would have witnesses from amongst his family or well-known courtiers, not a random, unknown Gunn from the Highlands of Scotland who then disappeared from the history books. *Burke's Peerage*[161] has just a token 'Gun' for the period around Ingram's time.

3.3 The knighthood Chief Gunn problem

'neither "Sir James Gun", not his father "Sir Donald", have been identified from contemporary records…' [162] *Michael J. Gunn*

Mythically the Gunn Chiefs then went[163] Sir Donald Gunn of Clyth and Ulbster followed by Sir James Gunn of Clyth and Ulbster[164] but there is no supporting primary evidence for either ever being alive nor, obviously, having anything to do with Clyth and Ulbster. After them came Coroner Gunn. The knights are also not mentioned in Sir Robert Gordon's text; that is a major problem.

The knighted Gunns were found in the 1800s some five hundred plus years after they supposedly lived so fiction has to be assumed. And Donald and James are such English names; they do not ring true for Celtic / Norse Scotland of the 1300s which supports the fictional nature of these knights.

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[158] Page 35, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*

[159] See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=L-2qBgAAQBAJ&pg=PA186&lpg=PA186&dq=Regesta+Regum+Scottorum+VI:+The+Acts+of+David+II,+no.+436&source=bl&ots=bbXdaAjNkh&sig=umugg_VcROhOEO21D-U2eoMMJUA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjQw-u3-fHSAhWmIMAKHXUrAIwQ6AEIHzAB#v=onepage&q=gynis&f=false page 247 for further detail. Accessed 21 June 2014.

[160] Page 196, M. A. Pollock, *Scotland, England and France after the loss of Normandy 1204-1296; 'Auld Amitie'.*

[161] Page 1705, *Burke's Peerage. Page 22 Michael J Gunn, The Crowners of Caithness.* Michael J. Gunn notes a John Gun (c.1290 - c.1360) as a possible Chief due to him being named eight times in the *Exchequer Rolls of Scotland* in connection with the important 'great ship' of Robert the Bruce and him that John Gun was in the Braehour 1896 Tree. According to that 1896 Tree, the grandfather of John Gun was Ottar Snaekolson who is proved to have not existed. And John's son is meant to be Sir Ingram Gun who also did not exist. That's a big issue. There is a John Gun in the *Exchequer Rolls of Scotland* but given surnames were not fixed at this time to accept this person as a Gunn in modern terms is doubtful. The ship in question was being built in the Dumbarton area (near Glasgow) so again whether he was a real, northern Highlands Gunn is highly questionable. This Gun should be ignored as he has no known links to anyone.

[162] Page 24, Michael J. Gunn, *The Coroners of Caithness.*

[163] With slight variations from tree to tree.

[164] According to *Burke's Peerage* without Clyth and Ulbster.

The knighthood problem.

An additional problem for these knighted Gunns is that knighthoods were not traditional in Scotland even by 1507-1508.[165] In fact, there was no Scottish knighthood order by 1558.[166] Coroner Gunn lived in the first half of the 1400s so a Gunn to be knighted before him would have had to have done something amazing which royalty really appreciated[167] and therefore made that Gunn into a knight, and such a Gunn would consequently be known to history and none is so known. Without historical support the idea of an amazing Gunn being knighted is so unlikely it can be ignored.

The second problem is that knighthoods were an Anglo-Norman import and *'when knights appear in Scotland they bear names that indicate an English or even Continental origin'*[168] – in other words knights were not local Scottish families like the Gunns.

The third problem is that Scottish knighthoods mattered when they were introduced; the *'absence of any class dividing line below the rank of baron, between noble and non-noble, in Scottish freeholding landed society made knighthood important as an index of high standing, especially for the upwardly mobile. That, and the endurance of feudal bonds and of the forty day military service obligation of knights, gave the knight a social significance that was relatively sharper than that which it enjoyed in, say, the English sub-baronial genteel society of knights and esquires'*[169] So, with Scottish knights we are talking important figures in local history, much more than with English knights of the time but, as said, there are no primary sources for these Gunn knights and there should be as Scottish knights were significant figures. The lack of all evidence adds support to the fictional nature of these knights.

And finally, there are the problems inherent in the myths. The mythical Gunn Chiefs did not have knighthoods, then they do and then the knighthood disappeared before Coroner Gunn. But knighthoods were inheritable so why wasn't Coroner Gunn a knight if he was the eldest son of Sir James Gunn (if Sir James existed)?[170] If Coroner Gunn was not the oldest son he needed a knighted older brother to inherit the title. But no mention of this brother exists and he would have been mentioned as Coroner Gunn was so important. In other words, the knighthood of Sir James Gunn would have been inherited by his eldest son[171] but that eldest son does not appear in history nor mythology. Again, evidence that the knighted Gunns did not exist.

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[165] Page 192, Andrea Thomas 'The Renaissance' in ed. T. M. Devine and J Wormald's *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Scottish History* says *'despite popular tradition and rather surprisingly, it seems that there was no formally established Scottish order of knighthood at this time.'*

[166] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the_Thistle accessed 31 January 2013 confirms no Scottish order of Knighthood by 1558. And the Gunns, in remote Caithness, were meant to have knighthoods in the 1300s!

[167] It was possible to become a knight through exceptional royal service; *'it was through royal service that (gave) ... final legitimisation for entry into knighthood'* Page 14, K Stevenson's *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland 1424-1513* but that would be fully documented in royal archives and Gunns are not so mentioned. If Coroner Gunn had been knighted that would make some sense; but the knighted Gunns have no history nor stories attached to them.

[168] Pages 154-155, David Crouch, *The Image of the Aristocracy in Britain 1000-1300*.

[169] Being from a review of K Stevenson's *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland 1424-1513* by Dr Maurice Keen, University of Oxford http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/613 accessed 31 January 2013.

[170] Page 13-14, K Stevenson's *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland 1424-1513.* Scottish knights (1424-1513) *'First and foremost a knight was expected to have a noble lineage and prove he was directly descended from a line of knights... heredity was a prime concern with regard to eligibility for knighthood in the fifteenth century.'*

[171] Or perhaps one might argue that Sir James Gunn did exist but Coroner Gunn was not his son - that fails as a solution due to knighthood issues and it wrecks the mythic Clan Gunn Chief line.

3.4 Conclusion

The list of the supposed ‘Gunn Chiefs’ before Coroner Gunn fails.

Three of the names existed but had nothing to do with the Gunns, the other two lack the slightest bit of supporting evidence – or logic - for their existence. As well, the total lack of links from one generation to the other show that this Gunn Chief tree should be ignored.

Overall, the Gunn Chiefs before Coroner Gunn are fantasy.

Halkirk 2011

Strathnaver 2011

4. Why Gunns are not a traditional Clan

Clans were united by claims of common descent from a distant ancestor…[172]

In 1704 Gunns are not listed in 'The Celtic muster rolls (which) *are exactly similar to the Clans of Scotland.'*[173]

The question of whether Gunns are a traditional clan will seem nonsensical to those who simplistically[174] believe all Scottish family names are clan names and so Gunns must be a clan. Traditionally not all Scottish family names conflate with clan surnames; non clan surnames include location based ones such as Murray and Ogilvie, and occupational surnames such as Stewart, Smith, Baxter and many more.[175]

But what is a clan? One view given in the *The Oxford Companion to Scottish Highlands* states *'Strictly defined, a clan was a biological phenomenon, a patrilineal descent group deriving from a common ancestor or eponym... '*[176]

A similar view is also shown by David Sellar (an ex Lord Lyon) -

By way of definition, it has been suggested that, 'Clann was used to describe a patrilineal kindred the members of which descended in known steps from a named ancestor' … This definition underlines two points believed to be true of the clan in Scotland and in Ireland: namely that the members of the true clan were related to one another through the male line, and that the eponym or name father of the clan was a historical, and not a mythical, character.[177]

Professor Celeste Ray explores the issue of what is a traditional clan in more detail -

Confusion between biological and sociopolitical dimensions of clans stems from nineteenth century Highlandism and its later perpetuation in the myriad of books celebrating tartanry (such as Robert Bain's The Clans and Tartans of Scotland*, originally published in 1958). Reedited through the years, Bain's text is still a staple of heritage enthusiast's libraries … Biological kinship was important for the clan elite, from whom a chief would come, but not for all clansfolk. Clans were variably composed of a*

[172] Page 1, Stuart MacHardy, *The Well of the Heads And Other Tales of the Scottish Clans.*
[173] Page 96-97, James Logan, *The Scottish Gael, Volume 1.* It is noteworthy the lack of mention of Clan Gunn / Clan Gunn Chiefs in the Gaelic Poetry of Scotland before 1700 although many Clan Chiefs are so mentioned, including minor ones. See, especially page 197, M. Pia *Coira By Poetic Authority The Rhetoric of Panegyric in Gaelic Poetry of Scotland to c.1700.* The continual absence of any evidence in documents of the time for Clan Gunn Chiefs adds to the surety that such Chiefs were never in existence in historic time; by contrast the Hebridean Chiefs – large and small – are fully documented by 1609, see Page 44- 47 J. L. Campbell, *Canna The Story of a Hebridean Island.*
[174] Tourist histories support this fallacy.
[175] For further information see http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/content/help/index.aspx?r=551&560 accessed 10 February 2015. The origin of Turnbull is as obscure as the real origin of the name Gunn; see Ian Grimble page 71 *Clans and Chiefs.* 'A misconception regarding the population and origin of the peoples of Scotland is that all people belong to clans, when in reality most of its inhabitants … had no clan connection at all.' Patrick L. Thomson 'The Transition of Clan MacTavish Surnames'.
[176] Page 93, Michael Lynch, *The Oxford Companion to Scottish Highlands.*
[177] Page 92 David Sellar, chapter 4 'The Family', in ed. E. J. Cowan and L. Henderson *A History of Everyday Life in Medieval Scotland, 1000 to1600*.

minority of immediate kin and a majority of non-kin inhabiting the clan's territorial base. Bain divides the clan between "broken men" (those without a chief who join the clan for protection and thereafter claim the chief's name), and "native men" (whom Bain interpreted as a small core group of the chief's blood relatives …. The American, and especially southern, emphasis on "blood" kinship within the clan could also be seen as an American cultural influence on concepts of Scottish heritage and / or an American elaboration of tartanism…[178]

In other words, traditional clans require a central, historically real, male founder to be a clan. The 'aristocracy' of the clan would descend from the common ancestor but probably the majority of a clan would not. Given that chapter 1 discussed an origin theory for Gunns as a non-kindred, location based group – with no central male founder - and chapter 2 detailed why the 'Orkney / Norse / Gunn' central male founder origin was impossible, then Gunns are not a clan on traditional, academic and historic grounds.[179] Many lowland clans are also highly clan doubtful.[180]

To further support the idea of Gunns not being an historic clan[181] an Act was passed by the Scottish Parliament in July 1587 *'for the quieting and keeping in obedience of the ... inhabitants of the Borders, Highlands and Isles'* and it included an attachment with *'the roll of the Clans that have captains, chiefs and chieftains upon whom they depend, ... and of some special persons of the said clans'* but there was no listing for Clan Gunn.[182] The absence of Clan Gunn from Clan lists has often occurred and continues today - Alister Farquhar Matheson[183] in his *Scotland's Northwest Frontier* writing on 'Clan Beginnings' explored the Mackays of Strathnaver history, including their lineage. There is no mention of a Clan Gunn. He also does not discuss Clan Gunn when writing about Clans of 'The Northeastern Sector.'[184]

In short, there are contemporary listings of Scottish Clans in 1587, 1609, 1704, and 1824 to name but a few dates. Clan Gunn does not appear in any of these listings. Is it credible that a Highland Clan could exist and prosper from at least 1450 (the Coroner's time) through to the early 19th Century but to miss official recognition in so many contemporary documents seems impossible.

[178] Pages 79-80, R. Celeste Ray, *Highland Heritage.* I like the subtlety of the title of her third map (page 85) which illustrates the 'Clan and Family Territories of Scotland' so getting around the question as to which surnames were or were not clan names.
[179] As I state often in this book given Gunns are not a traditional clan; it is worth noting the lack of primary source material for the existence of historic Clan Gunn Chiefs. The earliest relevant Highland's historical text of the time was Sir Robert Gordon's *A Genealogical History of the Earldom Of Sutherland*. In it he occasionally applied the word chief and chieftain to some Gunns. These terms should be viewed as shorthand for Gunn major families; chief / main / major mean the same thing. R. A Dodgshon's use of the *'term chief to describe anyone with significant position of rank and social control over how land was allocated, whether through their position as owner or merely tacksman'* Page 171 R. A Dodgshon in ed. R. A. Houston and I.D. Whyte *Scottish Society*, is another uncommon use of the word chief. If applied to the Gunns it could mean that the Coroner, and the heads of the MacHamish and Braemore families for some time, could be viewed as chiefs in the way that Gordon used the term - that is, as important families - but this is not the usage of the word as the tourist / romantic stories use it. Nor is either the common academic use of the term.
[180] See pages 84-6 Celeste Ray, *Highland Heritage,* '*surname and family societies … like Clan Armstrong … Clan Forrester… Clan Davidson … Clan Henderson'.*
[181] John Maculloch's 1824 book *The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland in letters to Sir Walter Scott,* chapter 13 describes the many Highland Clans known to him, including many obscure ones, but there is no mention of a Gunn clan.
[182] James VI: Translation; 1587, 8 July, Edinburgh, Parliament; Parliamentary Register; 29 July 1587; Legislation; For the quieting and keeping in obedience of the disordered subjects, inhabitants of the borders, highlands and isles; 1587 / 7 / 70.
[183] Page 320 Alister Farquhar Matheson *Scotland's Northwest Frontier.*
[184] Pages 536-538, Alister Farquhar Matheson, *ibid.*

Gunns are, though, a legally established modern clan. The Scottish Chancery legally appointed Hector Gunn as the first Chief of the Clan Gunn in 1803 and the Chancery then legally appointed his son Chief George Gunn in 1814. Chief George was Chief of the Clan Gunn at his father's death but the paperwork was only completed at a later time. Chief George's elder son was Chief Donald Gunn who was Chief from 1859 to 1863. Chief George's younger son was Chief Hector Gunn who was Chief from 1863 to his death in 1874**.**

It is from the time of these legally appointed Chiefs that 'Chief' was applied backwards to the most senior Gunns from Coroner Gunn. It also meant that 'Clan Gunn' was also backwardly in time applied.

This Chief line continues from the descent line of the uncle of Chief Hector – namely Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton's line. See pages 161-169.

SUMMARY Using normal historic and academic definitions of Scottish Highland clans the Gunns were not a clan as the Gunns had no founding father. They have become a modern clan since 1803.

Borrobol 2011.

Kinbrace 2011.

5. Diversion 1: the Gunn 'Westford Knight' myth

Clan Gunn literature often claims that its forebears were "Discoverers of America." The story is detailed in the Clan Gunn Heritage Centre in Latheron, Caithness … [185]

The Gunn 'Westford Knight' fairy story was meant to have occurred in 1380[186] when a Sir Henry Sinclair[187] was meant to have sailed from the Orkney Islands to Nova Scotia and beyond, and taken a knighted Gunn with him (the Gunn coat of arms / shield is later found carved on a rock at Westford, Massachusetts, USA as part of a larger illustration of the Gunn 'knight'). And so a Gunn was meant to be one of the first white[188] people to discover northern America. There is not a grain of truth in the story. Let's not forget that Prince Madog[189] of Wales discovered America in 1170, before Henry Sinclair! Yes, the Henry Sinclair / Gunn Westford knight fantasy is not the only absurdity in this area…

5.1 The *Zeno narrative* is a work of fiction problem

the Zeno affair remains one of the most preposterous and at the same time one of the most successful fabrications in the history of exploration[190]

Brian Smith, who was archivist at the Shetland Museum and Archives and also an Honorary Fellow at the Centre of Nordic Studies at the University of the Highlands and Islands,[191] has written a detailed demolition of the sole source for the supposed Sir Henry Sinclair trip from the Orkney Islands to America – the *Zeno narrative* - in an article[192] called 'Earl Henry Sinclair's fictitious trip to America.' In his view the *Zeno narrative* is *'an elaborate practical joke.'* He writes –

Henry Sinclair, an earl of Orkney of the late fifteenth century, didn't go to America. It wasn't until 500 years after Henry's death that anybody suggested that he did. The sixteenth century text that eventually gave rise to all the claims about Henry and America certainly doesn't say so. What it says, in so many words, is that someone called Zichmni, with friends, made a trip to Greenland. None of Henry Sinclair's contemporaries or near-contemporaries ever claimed he went to America; and none of the antiquaries who wrote about him in the seventeenth century said so either, although they made other absurd claims about him. The story is a modern myth…

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[185] From page 16, ed. Celeste Ray, *Transatlantic Scots*, University of Alabama Press, 2005 (being from Chapter 1 by Celeste Ray 'Transatlantic Scots and Ethnicity').
[186] This is the date given in the source document, see Brian Smith's article 'Earl Henry Sinclair's fictitious trip to America', *New Orkney Antiquarian Journal Volume 2 page* 3, or see part 1 at http://www.alastairhamilton.com/sinclair.htm accessed 7 March 2017.
[187] See http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/historicalfigures/henrysinclair/myth.htm accessed 9 March 2017 for the legend of Sir Henry Sinclair. It is worth noting that Sinclair has no Scots / Gaelic origin – it is probably from a Norman base.
[188] Is the emphasis given this story nothing more than a racist attempt to forget about First Americans?
[189] See Michael Senior's *Did Prince Madog Discover America?* demolition of this ridiculous idea. The Vinland Sagas detailing Norse discovery of America is however real history and is backed by real archaeology.
[190] *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio.php?id_nbr=592 accessed 28 March 2017.
[191] For a biography and select publications see https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/cultural/centre-for-nordic-studies/staff/brian-smith accessed 29 March 2017.
[192] The article can be found in print form in the *New Orkney Antiquarian Journal Volume 2* pages 3-28, or it can be found at http://www.alastairhamilton.com/sinclair.htm accessed 7 March 2017.

So, the original source document which is meant to show how a Gunn could have got to Northern America and become the 'Westford Knight' has no mention of Scotland, no mention of Caithness, no mention of the Orkney Islands, no mention of Henry Sinclair, no mention of Gunns and no mention of North America. That's a major problem for the Clan Gunn Westford Knight myth.

So what is the *Zeno narrative*? It is part of a small book published in 1558, probably written by Nicolo Zeno. The source is meant to be letters between Nicolo Zeno's ancestor – another Nicolo Zeno - and that ancestor's brother Antonio Zeno and Antonio's letters to a third brother Carlo Zeno. The narrative supposedly describes assorted adventures, islands and explorations in the North Atlantic. The *Zeno Narrative* explore' Nicolo dies in the far north after four or five years away. Antonio had joined him up there and he stayed for a further fourteen years. Both get involved with the fictional Prince Zichmni.

A major problem for the myth believers is that the life of Nicolo Zeno (the ancestor, the one meant to be exploring in the northern Atlantic) can be traced from archival material and was done so by Andreas da Mosto, and this Nicolo spent all his time in Venice and related local lands.[193] Brian Smith summarises the life so

Nicolò Zeno ... was a well-known navigator and public official in Venice from about 1360 to 1400. ... In May 1389 Nicolò received the command of a squadron of naval galleys in the gulf. The following year he was re-elected as military governor of the cities of Corone and Modone in southern Greece, but by the end of 1392 he had returned to Venice. In the first semester of 1393 he resumed his duties as a prestigious ducal councillor there. In August that year he set off for Corfu, where he had been elected bailiff and captain. ... In 1394 allegations emerged that Nicolò Zeno had been guilty of embezzlement whilst in charge of Modone and Corone. There was a lengthy debate on the subject in the Venetian Council of Forty during 1396. The Council's verdict was severe. They sentenced Nicolò to five years' exclusion from public office, fined him 200 gold ducats and ordered him to compensate the aggrieved parties. We don't hear about poor Nicolò again until 1400, when he wrote his last testament. He was no longer alive in 1403.[194]

So Nicolo Zeno's life in Venice and nearby lands is fully documented in the Venetian archives but according to the *Zeno narrative* at exactly the same time he is supposedly living and dying in the far northern Atlantic. Both can't be true – the life based on documents from the Venetian Archives has to be accurate; therefore the *Zeno narrative* must be fiction.

Fiction? Smith's article also summarised the various literary borrowings the author Zeno has used[195] The works include Columbus's letters, Vespucci's letters, the life of the fisherman Jeronimio Aguilar who had been shipwrecked, various printed accounts of Mexico, Cuba and much more. So, the *Zeno narrative* is shown to not be a work of original writing based on an exploration but fiction derived from existing literary sources and maps. And there are the many imaginary islands[196] (Porlanda, Tlas, Broas,

[193] See Andreas da Mosto 'I navigatori Nicolò e Antonio Zeno' Florence, 1933.
[194] Pages 12-13, Brian Smith's article 'Earl Henry Sinclair's fictitious trip to America', *New Orkney Antiquarian Journal Volume 2*
[195] Mainly using Fred W Lucas's *The Annals of the Voyages of the Brothers Nicolo and Antonio Zeno in the North Atlantic about the end of the fourteenth century, and the claim founded thereon to a Venetian discovery of America: a criticism and an indictment.*
[196] There are recognisable islands, the point is the number of fictional islands show it cannot be trusted as a realistic account.

Iscant, Trans, Mimant, Damberc, Bres…) in the northern Atlantic which now have 'disappeared' which supports the fictional base of the story.

So, when did the Henry Sinclair / North America myth start? It started in the 1780s[197] approximately four hundred years after the supposed event. To make the myth work you must first assume the *Zeno narrative* to be history and work backwards from the main historical figure, the King of Norway. The supposed Prince Zichmni beat the King of Norway in a battle in 1380 in the *Zeno Narrative*, so who in the real world beat the King of Norway at this time? Well no-one, but in 1379 Henry Sinclair was made Earl of the Orkney Islands by the King of Norway, so obviously Zichmni has to be Earl Sinclair. It's that sort of logic. Just ignore that Henry Sinclair has been written up in history with no known interest in maritime exploits, *'Even more tellingly, none of the antiquarians and biographers who wrote about Henry Sinclair… made any reference at all to such adventures and explorations. Henry Sinclair had two enthusiastic seventeenth century biographers: a Dane called Van Bassan and a cleric, Father Richard Augustin Hay. These authors wrote pages of absurd praise about Henry: they credited him with military campaigns that took place before he was born, and with a marriage to a princess that never took place at all. They invented titles and dignities for him, including the title 'prince' that he never possessed. The only thing they didn't mention was his alleged voyage of discovery.'*[198] And so the myth started and developed, getting further removed from the sole written text[199] and which ignored inconvenient history and geography when needed.

To restate, the *Zeno narrative* which is the *only* source for the supposed 'Prince' Henry Sinclair's journey from the Orkney Islands to North America, has no mention of the Orkney Islands, no mention of Scotland, no mention of Caithness, no mention of Henry Sinclair, no mention of North America, no Gunn, one of the key adventurers in the story is shown to be alive and well in Venetian lands when he is meant to be living and dying in the northern Atlantic and earlier literary works and maps are known to have been used which means the text cannot be viewed as a history / geography text but as fiction. That's a huge set of academic problems which the fantasists have to overcome.

And it gets worse; Jason Colavito in his excellent discussion[200] of the many absurdities around the whole Sinclair story points out that now the *'modern myth of Henry I Sinclair (is) as a Templar of the Holy Bloodline who discovered America to hide the Holy Grail.'* I am now looking forward to the next instalment of the Westford Knight story to include the opening of the tomb underneath the 'Gunn' Westford Knight carving and Indiana Jones climbing out in Gunn tartan bearing the Holy Grail…

Sean Martin in his history of the Knights Templar writes *'the so-called Zeno narrative – was not written until 1558 and is widely regarded as being highly spurious.'*[201] Notwithstanding the previously mentioned impossibilities the Clan Gunn Society USA[202] gives support to this *'highly spurious'* idea and it is also supported by the Clan Gunn Society UK Heritage Centre.[203] This support is shameful.

[197] The myth began in the 1780s by John Reinhold Forster, see Brian Smith's article, page 5.
[198] http://www.alastairhamilton.com/sinclair.htm accessed 2 April 2017.
[199] Smith's view is that R. H. Major is 'the villain in the piece'; this is due to his writing in the 1870s. See Part 3 of his article.
[200] See http://www.jasoncolavito.com/the-templars-the-holy-grail--henry-sinclair.html accessed 4 April 2017.
[201] Pages 136-137, S. Martin, *The Knights Templar; the History and Myths of the Legendary Military Order.*
[202] See https://www.clangunn.us/westford-knight.html accessed 9 October 2018.
[203] https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/dunbeath/clangunn/index.html accessed 9 October 2018.

5.2 Historic / general problems with the 'Westford Knight'

Given the previous section clearly shows the only source for the 'Westford Knight' is a work of fiction I shall only briefly go through the historic problems with the 'Clan Gunn Westford Knight' myth. These include

- The surname problem. As discussed in chapter 2.1 the Scottish Highlands, overall, did not have fixed surnames in the 1380s as they had patronymic surnames, so the fixed surname Gunn did not exist. A few very well-known families[204] did have fixed surnames by the 1380s but such people are very much recorded in the history texts unlike the invisible Gunns of this time.

- The knight problem. Chapter 3.3 points out the rarity of Scottish knights at this time. To restate – '*First and foremost a knight was expected to have a noble lineage and prove he was directly descended from a line of knights... heredity was a prime concern with regard to eligibility for knighthood in the fifteenth century.'* [205] Exceptions occurred. But *'it was through royal service that (gave) ... final legitimisation for entry into knighthood'*[206] There is no academic support for Gunns ever being knights at this time, let alone from a long line of knights or a Gunn having done *'royal service'* as both of these would be recorded in the historic documents of Scotland. Without there being knights there are obviously no knightly arms so the supposed coat of arms on the Westford knight cannot be Gunn.

- There is no support for the Gunn Westford Knight's existence anywhere outside the Zeno knight myth. If he was that important somewhere in real history he would have been mentioned.

- Why is the grave / memorial in Westford, Massachusetts? It's a long way from Nova Scotia. And it's more than sixty miles / one hundred kilometres inland. Why go so far? It's not logical that the expedition went to Westford. If one was undertaking a naval voyage of exploration one stayed on the coast. Or are we meant to believe their ocean-going boats sailed to Westford up unknown, random, shallow waterways in 1380?

- The etching of the Westford knight[207] in a major book on the subject shows the knight in full, very heavy gear which was not what one would wear through inland USA in 1380. The illustration shows a 'big boy' - think Friar Tuck in 'Robin Hood' movies - and no one that overweight wearing the illustrated outfit would have been capable of wandering through unknown lands as it would be physically impossible. It may, perhaps, be an idealised drawing but that does not deal with the weight issue. The knight outfit also postdates the expedition date by around two hundred years.

- What the etching supposedly shows is odd. One can imagine if a Knight had existed in 1380 and somehow made it to Westford and then died, his friends may have made a memorial. This etching does

[204] As already discussed in chapter 2.1 essentially surnames were a Norman invention; landed families linked to Norman descent are historically recorded and a few families made it up to the Highlands. Other Highland surnames are known, such as for those having descent from the Lord of the Isles. The name Gunn is obviously not linked to the Normans, nor is it famous in history books…
[205] Page 13-14, K Stevenson's *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland 1424-1513.*
[206] Page 14, K Stevenson's *ibid.*
[207] Page 34, D. Goudsward, *The Westford Knight and Henry Sinclair*.

not look like any memorial, not even an incompetent one, and a name would be expected on the memorial and perhaps a religious quotation. These are not there. As well, the Knight would have been shown being more 'restful.' So if it's not a memorial, what is it? I can't think of another logical reason for an etching to be done if it's not a memorial. If there is no logical reason for an etching to be done in 1380 then it's because it wasn't done at that time.

- If a Gunn made so much impact on the local First Americans say by staying for some time - and if this illustration / stone etching at Westford was meant to have been done by locals - more than one carving would have been found. Only one is found. And it bears no resemblance to any First American carving.

5.3 Archaeological objections

To restate, the sole source for the Gunn Westford Knight story is a work of fiction. The history does not add up. The archaeology of this hoax fails as well.

David K. Schafer[208], Senior Collections Manager Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University writes that the Westford knight carving is NOT –

- *A depiction of "...a rough life-sized portrayal of a late 14th century knight in full-length surcoat"*
- *Nor "....a knight's great sword, a shield and crest, and the knight's face in a bassinet helmet with pendent neckmail of the kind in use in A.D. 1360-1390".*
- *Nor should the heraldry which some people claim to see on the shield (since the *only* evidence of the shield that I could distinguish was the one painted in white paint on the bedrock by an unknown artist) be interpreted as a 14th century Scottish coat of arms.*
- *Nor should the "T-shaped" engraving (which is in fact visible on the bedrock) be thought of as "clearly show(ing) a hand and half-wheel pommel sword of Medieval European vintage".*
- *Nor should the "T-shaped" engraving be interpreted as "... an early 18th century iron tomahawk of the era between 1700 and 1750... cut in the exposed rock by a Westford settler as a memorial of encounter with the Indians....".*

Some things it is:

- *a roughly globular "T-shaped" engraving on a section of exposed bedrock.*
- *The engraving was made by repetitive punching, most likely with a metal punch…*
- *The "sword blade" that extends from the "T" are actually glacial scratches (marks made by rocks dragged along under the moving ice). The surface of the entire bedrock are covered by these parallel marks, and two are located in general proximity to the "T".*

[208] http://www.ramtops.co.uk/westford.html accessed 10 September 2016.

- *There are NO OTHER engravings on the bedrock: weathering of the schist, yes; glacial scratches, yes; undulations along the surface of the bedrock…*
- *Based upon environmental studies, this area would have been a hardwood forest in the 14th century, and given the current landscape (i.e. a flat area in an upland setting) the flat bedrock would have been buried under 1-3 feet of soil. Erosion of the area may have occurred as early as the colonial period due to tree cutting and subsequent farming…*
- *Even though I claim no expertise in 14th-century sea-faring vessels, I question whether Henry Sinclair could have sailed his four ships up "Stony Creek" to this Westford locale.*
- *And also is the simple fact that the town historian has evidence that the "T" was made by two local boys in the late-19th century…*

In other words, this senior academic archaeologist provides absolutely no support for the Westford Knight having any archaeological value whatsoever.

Associate Professor Elizabeth Chilton[209] makes a further point about why the Westford Knight idea fails. She writes - *"In the more than 15,000 active archaelogical sites in New England, there has never surfaced any other evidence that 14th-century Europeans traveled as far south as New England .... If someone came here and carved a stone, they would have left plenty of garbage behind. People don't just show up and carve on a stone and go home."* [210] In other words, it's just not humanly possible that explorers in the late 1380 were at Westford and took all their equipment / rubbish with them home in a very modern way, and left no other mark on the landscape.

[209] Elizabeth Chilton, associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
[210] http://www.appletonstudios.com/Congress2008DBA.pdf accessed 24 April 2017.

5.4 The AVM Runestone hoax

And if you can't accept that the Clan Gunn Westford Knight could be an archaeological hoax then consider the AVM Runestone 'creation' -

The AVM Runestone, also known as the Berg-AVM Runestone, is a hoax created in 1985 by students carving runes into a boulder near Kensington, Minnesota, not far from where the Kensington Runestone (hoax) *was found in 1898. In 2001, a carving expert and her geologist father found the AVM Runestone, told the press that it was proof of early Viking or Norse settlement in Minnesota, and began an investigation to prove its authenticity. The creators came forward with their story that it was purely a hoax and not an artifact of Viking explorers*.[211]

One of the 'fraudsters' is now Professor Kari Ellen Gade of the Department of German Studies at Indiana University. The Kensington Runestone, mentioned above 'proved' fourteenth century Scandinavian explorers made it to Minnesota; *'the scholarly consensus has classified it as a 19th-century hoax'*. [212]

The point is simple; the USA has several of these European whites discovered America before Columbus archaeological hoaxes, the Gunn Westford Knight example is but one of them.

5.5 Summary

The 'Clan Gunn Westford Knight' has no primary source evidence and no archaeological evidence to support his existence. It's time for this Westford Knight myth to disappear from Gunn, American and Scottish history.

[211] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AVM_Runestone accessed 24 April 2017.
[212] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensington_Runestone accessed 24 April 2017.

Dirlot cemetery 2011

Lybster 2011

6. Diversion 2: Saint Donan / St Donnan and his Gunn non-links

St Donan[213] was a priest who died 17 April 617 C.E. on Eigg in the Hebrides; he was most likely Irish.

The prominence given to St Donan in the first chapter of Mark Rugg Gunn's text (*'St Donan occupies a special place in the roll of martyrs to be remembered throughout the centuries by the Gunns'*[214]) and Clan Gunn Society UK social events[215] is excessive given that St Donan died over six hundred years before the Gunns started if one accepts the Orkney Islands origin myth; as well, obviously St Donan was not a Gunn in any shape or form.

The best view on St Donan for Gunn mythic history[216] believers is that he was a saint who died many hundreds of years before Gunns started and who might be associated with Kildonan in Sutherland and who might be associated with a small church which Gunns might have used. That is a very tenuous connection with Gunn history.

In reality the supposed St Donan link with Kildonan fails; historically it is so unlikely as to be impossible and there is no primary source or archaeological support for St Donan being in the area. The idea that Kildonan has to mean St Donan fails for several reasons, including what Kildonan was and is called in Gaelic.

[213] I prefer St Donan but I have used St Donnan when so used by other authors.

[214] See page 10 and page 12, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* for over the top language in St Donan's support. I also note the pro-Christian bias – 'martyrs' and such like - of the language used.

[215] The Clan Gunn Society UK had a weekend to celebrate St Donan on 13 April to 15 April 2012 in London. The weekend consisted of Friday dinner at the National Liberal Club (£25 each), Saturday lunch at the Pavilion Tea House, a tour of the Royal Observatory (£7) at Greenwich Park, a formal dinner at Greenwich (£56 each and one glass of wine free) and a National Maritime Museum Tour (£7) Sunday morning. So, for one person the weekend was £95 minimum, excluding getting into London and / or accommodation in London. The 1996 St Donan's day dinner in Edinburgh charged £44 a single. The 2019 Dinner was £85 a head at the Houses of Parliament in London.

[216] The main source arguing for St Donan and Kildonan is a chapter called 'St Donnan the Great, and his muinntir' by the Rev. Alexander Black Scott DD, published in the *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society vol i part iii* in 1906. It relies on statements of hope (such *'as the (churches) could not have been founded later … they must have been founded by S. Donnan').* Scott is factually questionable; the church which he says is called S. Donnan's uses language from pages 57-59 of Donald Sage's *Memorabilia Domestica* which was published in 1840 and which described the church Donald Sage knew well but Sage did not call the church St Donnan's church. So, the only church linked to Saint Donan is not so described by the person who knew it first-hand. The myth-making is obvious.

6.1 St Donan's life and why he would not have gone to the Kildonan area

Donnan was fairly anonymous until he was martyred (at Eigg)[217]

St Donan was an Irish priest who introduced Christianity to some early Picts on the west coast of Scotland, in what was the Kingdom of Dalriada. He is the obscure patron saint of Eigg, where he was *'martyred'* on 17 April 617.[218] Hamish Haswell-Smith summarises his life so; he *'had been trained at Whithorn, and may have stayed for a time at Loch Alsh* (Eilean Donan)*,* (and) *eventually set up a sizable monastery at Eigg.'*[219]

Haswell-Smith's modest list of three places associated with St Donan is in major contrast to the Reverend Black's 1906[220] list. He wrote about St Donan that

The following are the places in which he founded churches. They are given in the calculated or known order of foundation.

Kildonan in Colmonell.
Kildonan in Carrick.
Kildonan in Arran.
Kildonan in Kintyre.
Kildonan on Loch-Garry.
Parish of Kildonan, Sutherland.
Kildonan, Little Loch Broom.
Eilan-Donnain, Kintail.
S. Donnan's, Uig.
Kildonan in South Uist.
Kildonan in Eigg.

Given this is from the most supportive document for St. Donan readily available it is reasonable to assume that every place remotely linked to him (rightly or wrongly) is on this list. It is unlikely that St Donan founded churches at all the places listed; there are too many of them. Some of the places may only have been where St Donan lived, some may have been places associated with people who admired him, some may be later established places dedicated to him or, as in the case of Kildonan, Sutherland, some may just be wrongly linked to him. All the places (excluding Kildonan Sutherland and Loch Garry[221]) are on the Scottish west coast[222] or islands off the west coast, in basically ancient Dalriada.

[217] Emeritus Professor John Hunter, University of Birmingham, https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/monastery-where-christian-saint-was-martyred-is-uncovered-on-eigg-1-2465868 accessed 21 March 2019.
[218] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donn%C3%A1n_of_Eigg.
[219] Page 135, Hamish Haswell-Smith, *The Scottish Islands.*
[220] http://www.cushnieent.force9.co.uk/CelticEra/Saints/saints_donan.htm accessed 5 March 2019. Colmonell is in South Ayrshire; Carrick is in Arygyll and Bute; the Kildonans are in Arran and Kintyre; little Loch Broom is near Ullapool; the well-known Eilean Donan is near Dornie and further St. Donan places are on Uig, South Uist and Eigg.
[221] I have my doubts about St Donan and Loch Garry – Loch Garry is sort of central Scotland and roughly in the line between Skye and the Cairngorms. Similar to Kildonan, there is no logic that St Donan would have gone inland to areas where he did not speak the language.
[222] See page 64 of James Hunter's *Last of the Free A History of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* which omits Sutherland from places associated with Donan.

This makes sense given the placement of Iona which he visited and where may have spent time, his Irish origin, his murder on Eigg and the way transport using a boat was sensible in the early 600s.

What does not make sense is Kildonan in Sutherland being linked to him.[223] Basically all bar Kildonan in Sutherland on the list are reasonably close to each other and match the known area of early Christianity; Kildonan in Sutherland and Caithness are on the east coast and not part of the early Christian endeavours.[224] The links between Ireland and the west coast of Scotland are well-known;[225] the links to the east coast of Scotland were in essence non-existent. Sutherland was a different country - the Pictish land of Cait. And the language was different; Donan spoke Gaelic but probably not Pictish (St Columba did not speak Pictish[226]). So, either St Donan would have had to learn Pictish – a feat which should have been noted in the historic papers or St Donan would have had a translator which also would have appeared in the historic papers. And neither option is so noted.

And travel was dangerous and difficult in the early 600s. After all, in the 600s there were no comfortable roads or tracks. St Donan was Christian Irish; Gunn Kildonan was pagan Pictland[227] and a long way from where he was based. A boat trip around the top of Scotland – past territory full of unknown people - is not likely due to the quality of the boats of the time. Alternatively, why would St Donan walk or ride from the west coast (or inland from the coast if he had used a boat) to what would have been the random place later called Kildonan, a place of no known settlement at that time? And through all sorts of unknown dangers? There were many more suitable places for converting 'heathens' on the west coast especially as St Donan, as discussed, most likely had no Pictish language skills. And Picts had a reputation for violence – shown by the wars of 634, 638 and 642 where Dalriada (which included Iona) was attacked by the Picts. The 642 war, in particular, basically meant the start of the end of the Dalriadic Kingdom. Such violence further supports the extreme unlikelihood of Christian St Donan ever being in Pictish Kildonan.

Alister Farquhar Matheson's summary of St Donnan's life[228] is – *'It was another Irish monk, Donnan, who first dared to establish a monastery in Pictish territory on the Isle of Eigg in the waters around Arisaig … Clearly a single-minded zealot … Donnan's mission was soon in trouble since the pagan Pictish lords who held sway there objected to his presence, with its implicit threat to their authority. On 17th April 617, according to Irish chronicles a war band landed on the island (and Donnan) and some fifty of his followers were put to the sword.'*

The point is simple - there was no way St Donan had gone by himself to quietly live for some years in the far Pictish land of Kildonan. It's totally against his behaviour of establishing visible, large missions[229] and it's out of character for the Picts to let such a Christian survive.

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[223] Page 64, James Hunter *Last of the Free*. When discussing Saint Donnan Hunter does not mention any travel to Kildonan, Sutherland.
[224] See Page 93 John Haywood *The Historical Atlas of the Celtic World* as an example.
[225] In Highland clan history this link is probably most noticeable by Sorley Boy Macdonnell who was descended from the Lords of the Isles; see J. Michael Hill's *Fire & Sword: Sorley Boy MacDonell and the Rise of Clan Ian Mor 1538-90.* The Scottish name of the clan being the MacDonnells of Dunnyveg. The history is after St Donan but shows the depth of the western Highlands and Ireland link.
[226] Page 49, James Hunter, *Last of the Free A History of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.*
[227] Page 21, George Rosie, *Curious Scotland Tales from a Hidden History*.
[228] Page 308, Alister Farquhar Matheson, *Scotland's Northwest Frontier.*
[229] See https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/monastery-where-christian-saint-was-martyred-is-uncovered-on-eigg-1-2465868 accessed 21 March 2019 for archaeological work on St Donan's buildings on Eigg.

There are also no records of his journey to Sutherland. Early Christian records of the Saints are quite detailed; see, for example, A. O. Anderson's *Early Sources of Scottish History* for primary sources for the Saints at this time including St. Donan, where no such mention of St. Donan and Sutherland is made. And such record would have been made because he would have achieved something which even St. Columba did not achieve; St. Columba travelled to near Inverness in 574. St Donan's trip in the late 500s or early 600s would have been noticed and recorded.

There is also no archaeological evidence to support the idea. A building, a tomb - something would have been found if the literate and skilled St Donan had ever made it to Kildonan. There is, for example, major archaeological remains at Eigg[230] supporting St Donan's time there. After all '*St Donnan … worked on the pattern laid down by St Ninian, establishing monasteries and conducting … mission-work from them*'[231] – St Donan did not go and hide away in obscure Kildonan and leave no physical record of his life there as that would be against how he lived the rest of his life.

So,

- St. Donan certainly lived and worked on the west coast of Scotland.
- There is no Christian record supporting St. Donan living in Caithness / Sutherland.[232]
- There is no archaeological support for St. Donan living at Kildonan.
- It would have been illogical - and impossible - to travel inland to Kildonan in the land of the Picts in the 600s from Dalriada.

St. Donan had nothing to do with Kildonan in Sutherland, in consequence he has no part in Gunn history.

[230] See https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/monastery-where-christian-saint-was-martyred-is-uncovered-on-eigg-1-2465868 accessed 21 March 2019 for more detail.
[231] Page 39, Agnes Mure Mackenzie *The Foundations of Scotland.*
[232] See pages 142-144, A. O. Anderson's monumental work *Early Sources of Scottish History Volume 1* for discussion of Donan. There was a suggestion that Eigg meant a spring in Caithness but that is firmly rejected by Andersson *'there is no doubt that the island of Eigg is meant'* Page 143. If Andersson does not provide support evidence for Donan being in Caithness or Sutherland then it is extremely unlikely to be anywhere.

6.2 On 'Kildonan' in Sutherland not being related to St Donan

The idea that the word Kildonan in Sutherland axiomatically means the church or chapel of St Donan is one which is wrong.

Firstly, on historic grounds; St Donan was a builder of churches as discussed in 6.1, but where is the church or the remains of the church he ought to have built to match his work on Eigg? There are no Church ruins from the 600s associated with him in Sutherland of which I am aware. This is obviously different from a much later church which has been attached to his name. Some[233] argue that he lived in a cell on the Helmsdale river but a cell also does not match his known life history nor again is there archaeological support for the idea.

Secondly, one must question how the name 'Donan' would have been preserved; it is a Gaelic(ish) name but Kildonan in the 600s was Pictish. The Picts were a nation with a non-Christian religion and a separate language. As discussed in chapter 1.2 the Picts became Celtic and so used Gaelic by the early 800s, around two hundred years after St Donan's death. The idea Picts would have preserved for two hundred years a Gaelic(ish) name for a person from an alien religion when they did not speak Gaelic, and someone who left no permanent mark on the land seems unlikely. In other words, if St Donan had lived in the Kildonan area in ancient times then one would have thought the Gaelic name for the area would reflect that fact but it doesn't.

The pre-St Donan and post-St Donan Gaelic name for the Kildonan area was discussed in 1793 by the Rev. Sage;

The river of Helmsdale, which passes through the Strath, is called Abhin[234] (Abhainn river) *Iligh, the Strath, more frequently, if not altogether, is called Strath Iligh, and the Gaelic name of Helmsdale, in the country language, is called Bun Iligh, that is the mouth or lower part of the water, where it issues into the Moray Firth. If then the name of the parish has been changed from Iligh to Kildonan, as few have called it Scir Iligh, the parish of Iligh or Ilie must be the original name and designation; and it is rendered still more probable, by the Roman geographers, who place the river Ilie in this neighbourhood, which must evidently have been Helmsdale.*[235]

In other words, 'Iligh' was Kildonan. This is supported by the 1834 *The New Statistical Account of Scotland* view that The *Strath of Kildonan … in Gaelic it is alone known by the name of Stra' Iligh*[236]

So with Iligh / Ilie / Abhin Iligh / Avoniligh[237] we have the name for what is now Kildonan from Roman times; 'Ila' was certainly known by Ptolemy and it may be Pictish or Pretonic in origin. The name continues right through to now - we have Strathullie / Strathully being part of the parish of

[233] http://www.cushnieent.force9.co.uk/CelticEra/Saints/saints_donan.htm accessed 5 March 2019.
[234] Avon / Abhin is listed as a pre-Celtic name for river in Professor W. F. H. Nicolaisen's *Scottish Place Names* page 178.
[235] Page 106 ed. Sir John Sinclair, *The Statistical Account of Scotland Volume 3*; the chapter on Kildonan is by the Rev. Sage.
[236] Page 134, ed. Sir John Sinclair, *ibid.*
[237] This river is supposed to be the Helmsdale river of the Scandinavian intruders, called by the Celtic inhabitants Avou-Uile, or Avon-Iligh, the floody water. http://www.archive.org/stream/historyofhighla01brow/historyofhighla01brow_djvu.txt accessed 18 May 2013 and also called Avoniligh in the 1868 National Gazeteer http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/sct/SUT/Kildonan/Gaz1868.html accessed 10 May 2013.

Kildonan.[238] Thomas Sinclair also has Helmsdale being called Strathully.[239] Whatever Iligh / Ilie means is not important; it is enough that it has nothing to do with St Donan[240] which is shown by it being in use from before St Donan was meant to be in Kildonan and yet is still in use today. If the local Gaelic name has nothing to do with St Donan then the most logical answer is that the Kildonan / St Donan link has been parachuted in after his death.

So what could Kildonan mean if not St Donan? When considering Kildonan one should note Professor W. F. H. Nicolaisen's view (he was one time Director of the Scottish Place-Names Survey in the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh) that *'it is not always easy to sift the cill-names (as in church) proper from those which in their anglicized form look identical but, when properly examined, are found to contain elements such as Coille 'wood', cuil 'nook' and the like... '*[241] So, just because a place name starts with Cill or Kil does not automatically mean it is a church related place name. It could, for example, mean a wood or forest if you like. He also suggests *'*Dubona from *Dubo- 'black.'*[242] The Gaelic Dubh as black is readily accepted.[243] Now if the start of Kildonan was really Coille meaning 'wood / forest' this would make, for example, 'Coille – Dubh' mean 'black woods / forest'. In other words, Kildonan could mean black forest.

That is a sensible meaning for that which is anglicised now as 'Kildonan'; ancient Scottish forests are known from there. The *Origines Parochiales Scotiae*[244] in 1855 notes Kildonan *'is an old hunting forest'*. But it's more than a shady forest - *'The trunk of a fir tree, dug up in the higher part of Kildonan, measured seventy-two feet in length, and was of proportional thickness. The appearance of this root, encrusted with charcoal, proved by what means it had been levelled to the earth.'*[245] So we have in the 1830s a discussion showing that the great forests around Kildonan were certainly burnt by firing[246] - the idea that Kildonan means 'black wood / forest' (or charcoaled wood if you prefer) is certainly much more likely than any link to St Donan.

The real meaning of Kildonan is not critical[247] – and probably impossible to ascertain - it is only important to recognise that place names starting with Kil are not always meant to be read as a 'Church' or 'Chapel.' Kildonan in Sutherland probably has nothing to do with St Donan.

[238] Pages 734-735, *Origines Parochiales Scotiae Volume 2* ed. C. Innes.
[239] Page 38, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns.*
[240] See Brien Friel's play *Translations* for how renaming the landscape can influence traditional Gaelic (Irish) society.
[241] Page 129 W.F. H. Nicolaisen*, Scottish Place Names.*
[242] Page 177 W.F. H. Nicolaisen*, ibid.*
[243] See https://www.omniglot.com/language/colours/gaelic.htm accessed 21 March 2019.
[244] https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn6/8103/81030079.6.pdf page 734, accessed 16 March 2019.
[245] Page 87, James Logan, *The Scottish Gael or Celtic Manners*, *Volume 1.*
[246] Page 88, James Logan, *ibid*. *'In Sutherland* (the woods) *have also been destroyed by conflagration.'*
[247] How could Kildonan get its name? Perhaps some English-speaking person, with poor Gaelic, in the early 1800s wandered up to the Kildonan area and asked a local where he was. The local replied 'Wood, dark' due to the poor Gaelic phrasing. The English-speaking person went back - perhaps to his manse – and wrote up the name of the area… See Brien Friel's play *Translations* for such encounters in Ireland…

6.3 St Donan's Church? at Kildonan

It is highly questionable whether the Kildonan Church now assumed to be named after St Donan had that name at an early stage.

Firstly, would there be a St Donan named church? By the early 1600s northern Scotland was Presbyterian.[248] But St Donan was a minor Catholic Saint so it is unlikely that a Church dedicated to him would have retained such a name.

Secondly an early reference using the name St Donan's Church[249] is a 1906 text by the Rev. Scott and in his text - when describing the church - he used language from the Rev. Donald Sage's 1840 volume.[250] But Sage did not use the term St Donan's Church[251] when describing Kildonan's church and, as it was the Rev. Donald Sage's father's church, he knew it well and described the church in detail. Sage just called it 'Kildonan, the Church'. The title of St Donan's Church[252] seems to have come into use *after* the Rev. Sage lived which is obviously much later than St Donan's time.

Fifteen years after the Rev. Sage the *Origines Parochiale Scotiae Vol.2. no.2* in 1855 wrote of the Kildonan St Donan Church that *'The church, said to be dedicated to St Donan…;*[253] the word *'said'* is crucial as is the word *'dedicated.'* Neither word gives support for it being where St Donan lived or prayed. So, the core book on the origin of Scottish Parishes was certainly not convinced of the link to St Donan. In other words, in 1855 we have a hint that the Kildonan Church was becoming attached to St Donan but that is not the same as started by him.

So, the person of St Donan was first linked to the Kildonan church in mid-to-late Victorian times twelve hundred and fifty years or so after his death. The Kildonan church has been in existence since at least the 1200s but its supposed links to the actual person of St Donan fail; it may now be dedicated to him but the actual St. Donan has no links to the Kildonan area.

Overall, there is no proof that St Donan lived in the Kildonan area and logic says he would not have been there. Kildonan cannot mean 'Church of St Donan' as otherwise the original Gaelic name for the area would reflect something about St Donan and it doesn't. St Donan does not deserve a place in Clan Gunn history.

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[248] By this I mean the hierarchy – the King, landowners and such like. Scattered Catholics were around.
[249] Canmore also gives this church the title of St Donnan's Church, with the main references being the *Origines Parochiale Scotiae*, Sage and Scott. https://canmore.org.uk/site/7175/kildonan-church-of-scotland-parish-church accessed 16 March 2019.
[250] Page 57, Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica; Or, Parish Life in the North of Scotland.*
[251] Page 57, Donald Sage, *ibid*.
[252] Ancient Gunn links to this church are questionable. Sage talked about Gunn Chiefs page 57, Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica; Or, Parish Life in the North of Scotland* but see chapter 4 for the non-existence of early Gunn Chiefs. The church may, however, have been a place where some important – chief - Gunns were buried.
[253] Page 737 https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn6/8103/81030079.6.pdf accessed 16 March 2019.

Helmsdale 2011

7. The Gunn / Keith feud myth

The idea that the Gunns and the Keiths had some sort of long-lasting feud is much written about but does not stand examination. If the Gunn Keith feud did not exist then the story about the Keiths involvement in the death of Coroner Gunn – see chapter 8.3 - becomes extremely questionable through lack of motivation.

There are two parts to the invented feud; assorted battles supposedly between Gunns and Keiths (but which often did not include Keiths but often included Mackays) and a couple of Gunn of Braemore stories. The Braemore stories are both after the death of Coroner Gunn which means that they have no relationship to the killing of Coroner Gunn but are discussed in 7.2 and 7.3.

7.1 Gunn / Keith / Mackay battles – or not?

We do not know when Coroner Gunn was born but his death was approximately 1452, as discussed in chapter 8.3. The following supposed Gunn / Keith / Mackay 'battles' are in – or near – the Coroner's lifetime. The battle years should be treated with caution; they are likely, but not necessarily totally accurate, dates.

1426. Harpsdale (being eight miles – about thirteen kilometres - south of Thurso).
Sir Robert Gordon in his *Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* is the earliest recorder by a long way of Sutherland events. He wrote -

In the days of Robert, Earl of Sutherland, the year 1426, Angus-Dow Mackay, and his son Niel, assembling all the forces of Strathnaver, they entered into Caithness with all hostility, and spoiled the same. The inhabitants of Caithness convened with all diligence, and fought against Angus-Dow Mackay at Harpsdale, where there was great slaughter on either side. The report hereof came to the ears of King James the First (1394-1437), *who thereupon came north to Inverness, of intention to pursue Angus-Dow Mackay. Hearing of the king's being at Inverness, he came and submitted himself to the king's mercy, and gave his son Niel in pledge for his good obedience from thenceforward: which submission the king accepted, and sent Niel Mackay to remain in captivity on the Bass Rock who from thenceforth was always called Niel-Bass Mackay*[254]

Note the singular lack of the word Gunn in the account. Mark Rugg Gunn – in 1969, about three hundred and forty years after Gordon - records this as a Gunn Mackay battle but does allow that '*it was no means certain that Gunns were involved.'*[255] The Mackays were punished for the battle by King James the First, but no-one else was. If it had been 'Gunns versus Mackays' then Gunns would have been in the records along with the Mackays.[256]

[254] Pp. 63 – 64, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* written between 1615 and 1625.
[255] Page 40, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[256] See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Harpsdale accessed 7 February 2013.

So the battle of Harpsdale is not a Gunn / Keith battle – it's not even a battle where Gunns were specifically mentioned. The battle of Harpsdale is between the Mackays and some of the people of Caithness. Gunns might have been part of 'the forces of Strathnaver' or 'the inhabitants of Caithness' but that is not the same as a Gunn / Keith battle.

1437. **Knock Stanger** (near Sandside, Dounreay). As a consequence of the preceding battle the son of the Chief of the Mackay (Niel Mackay) was held hostage to the Mackays' good behaviour, but was released in 1437 and he then raided in northern Caithness, where probably some Gunns (and others) lived. In this raid the local people were chased to Dounreay. Mark Rugg Gunn notes that *'the battle was probably aimed primarily at the followers of Sutherland of Duffus'* and that *'the Gunns are not specifically mentioned.'*[257] In other words, Mackays raided an area where some random Gunns may have lived who then fled due to the raiders.

So, that's another Gunn / Keith battle which lacks records and which, at most, involved Gunns as victims, along with other local inhabitants. There is no evidence to support the idea of an interclan feud.

1438[258] **Tannach Moor** (four miles south of Wick). Again, it's worth noting Gordon's record of this battle. He used 1464[259] as the year which seems unlikely; an Earl of Caithness was around and one suspects a Coroner of some sort would also be around and both would deal with the events described as it would be their legal duty to do so. Sir Robert Gordon's description goes —

… some serious disputes had arisen between Keith of Ackergill and the Guns and other inhabitants of Caithness. The Keiths, mistrusting their own forces, they sent to Angus Mackay (the son of Niel-Wasse) intreating him to come to their aid; whereunto he easily condescended. Then did the inhabitants of Caithness convene in all haste, and met the Strathnaver men and the Keiths, at a place in Caithness called Blare Tannie, i.e The Moor of Tanach. There ensued a cruel fight, with great slaughter on either side. In the end the Keiths had the victory…[260]

So, according to Gordon, this battle starts off as the Keiths against the '*Guns and other inhabitants of Caithness;'* the second mention though removed *'Guns'* and just has *'inhabitants of Caithness'*. This battle is not Guns versus Keiths and Mackays; the battle is best viewed as Keiths (with Mackays) against Caithness people (with some 'Guns').

Note that Keith is 'of Ackergill' which is not the same as saying Chief of the Clan Keith, and that no individual Gunn is specifically mentioned. There was no landed 'of' Gunn or Chief Gunn; it would be mentioned along with Keith of Ackergill.

[257] Page 40 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[258] Page 40 *ibid*.; 1438 is Mark Rugg Gunn's year for this battle is the date given in *Conflicts of the Clans* first published by the Foulis Press in 1764, written from a manuscript from the time of King James VI of Scotland (1566 - 1625).
[259] As well, this battle concerns a son of Niel Mackay - Niel is mentioned as being an adult in battle in 1426; Gordon's 1464 year seems very late for a child of his.
[260] Page 69, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland*.

A second account uses language similar to Gordon's account —

About the year of God 1438, there fell some variance betwixt the Keiths and some others of the inhabitants of Caithness. The Keiths, mistrusting their own forces, sent to Angus Mackay of Strathnaver (the son of Neil Wasse), entreating him to come to their aid, whereunto he easily yielded; so Angus Mackay, accompanied with John Mor MacIan-Riabhaich, went into Caithness with a band of men, and invaded that country. Then did the inhabitants of Caithness assemble in all haste, and met the Strathnaver men and the Keiths at a place in Caithness called Blair-tannie. There ensued a cruel fight, with slaughter on either side. In the end the Keiths had the victory,[261]

This version has no mention of the Gunns.

Mannistanes (near Halberry) There is the absurd, undated story of the battle of Mannistanes - the 'Hill of many stones.' The Gunns were meant to have fought the Keiths and won even though the Devil[262] helped the Keiths. Mannistanes is where *'the Gunns commemorated the day by burying the dead ... in regular rows setting up standing stones as a gravestone at the head of each warrior.* '[263] So, this battle included the Devil and incorporated ancient standing stones into a good tale but there is, unsurprisingly, no historic support for this story. Ironically the only battle that Gunns ever won is the most blatantly unlikely to have ever happened.

Mannistanes is a Neolithic / Bronze Age[264] site which again wrecks the whole Gunn / Keith battle idea as the Neolithic / Bronze Age predates the Gunns and Keiths. The 'Hill o Many Stanes' is discussed in *The Lore of Scotland; A Guide to Scottish Legends*[265] – note the word legend. The text records that in *'the 1970s Professor Alexander Thom argued that they* (the stones) *were used to calculate the movements of the moon'*. The text also points out that the Manistanes may have had a religious significance as they are near burial cairns. The stones are laid out in fan shapes[266] - which is known throughout Caithness and Sutherland but which is otherwise unknown in the United Kingdom – and it is suggested that ceremonial / artistic / religious / astronomy reasons were the cause of this shape. The book does not provide any support for a Gunn / Keith battle.[267]

Folklore Jennifer Westwood and Sophia Kingshill in their *The Lore of Scotland A Guide to Scottish Legends* record a Dirlot Castle story[268] where a pool near the castle held a treasure, stored there by the Castle's owner to keep it safe. Various swimmers tried to find the treasure but they were all never seen again except for some of their internal organs which floated to the top of the pool. This suggests the pool contained a kelpie / water horse. Westwood and Kingshill point out this story was first recorded in 1937 but by 1977 it appeared in a different form this being that the Castle was now owned by a *'Clan*

[261] From *Conflicts of the Clans*. In this account the battle is dated as 1438.
[262] Page 46, Mark Rugg Gunn *Clan Gunn* and see Page 64, A. Mackenzie, 'The Celtic Magazine', Volume 6.
[263] Page 46. Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[264] Page 110, ed. Donald Omand, *The Caithness Book*.
[265] Pages 359-360, J. Westwood & S Kingshill, *The Lore of Scotland A Guide to Scottish Legends*.
[266] Page 44, ed. Donald Omand, *The New Caithness Book*.
[267] Pages 359-360, J. Westwood and S. Kingshill, *ibid.*
[268] Pages 350-352, J. Westwood and S. Kingshill, *The Lore of Scotland A Guide to Scottish Legends.*

Gunn Chief'[269] who had invaded the Thurso area and returned with lots of gold. The Keiths (of course!) arrive at the castle to fight for the gold. The Gunns lose so the Gunn Chief's wife hurls the gold – by then in a cauldron - into a deep pool.

So we have another piece of storytelling able to masquerade as Gunn / Keith history – but we have a clear statement as to the original story and its alteration by 1977. If this 1977 fiction had been written, say, two hundred years earlier many would now accept it as history like so many other Gunn myths.

SUMMARY Overall, we have three battles which might have included some Gunns, but only one of which specifically mentions Keiths and Gunns (in passing). In the three battles there is no mention of any Clan Gunn Chief nor Clan Gunn on the warpath. It's not much of a Gunn / Keith clan feud then. Sure, it's unpleasant and reflects the nastiness of the time; but a big feud? No. The Gunn Keith battles which were meant to be the basis of the feud which explained why the Keiths supposedly murdered Coroner Gunn has no significant base in these events.

I am ignoring the Mannistanes event and the cauldron of gold story as both are obviously fictional.

[269] There are many impossibilities in these stories starting with the Gunns never having an historic chief nor a castle of any sort, let alone Dirlot castle. Unusual that the Gunns are the bad guys in this story.

7.2 Helen Gunn of Braemore story, supposedly set around 1410

The story in Mark Rugg Gunn's view is that –

…. Lachlan Gunn of Braemore … had a beautiful daughter Helen. She was meant to marry her cousin Alexander Gunn. Donald Keith of Ackergill who was acting as factor of the Braemore property saw her and made an 'indecent proposal' to her which she rejected and so he brought some Keiths to Braemore on her wedding night. There was a fight. Helen was seized and taken to the Keith's Ackergill Tower where she became a 'victim of the brutal and licentious Keith' so threw herself 'headlong' from the battlements. This was meant to have happened somewhere between 1400 and 1420.[270]

This story has nothing to do with the Keiths supposed murder of Coroner Gunn as there is the insurmountable problem of Braemore land. The Braemore Gunns are descended from Robert Gunn, accepted as the probable second son of Coroner Gunn; see chapter 11.1 for the family. Now, the Braemore Gunns only come into existence once the Coroner's family scatters after his death. So, self-evidently, the Helen Gunn of Braemore story has nothing to do with the feud which supposedly caused Coroner Gunn to be killed as he was already dead or the Braemore Gunns would not be in existence. So, the event can't have happened in 1400-1420 as the Coroner died about 1450, see chapter 8. That's a problem.

As well, it's hard to work out exactly which generation Lachlan Gunn of Braemore was (or even if he existed) but he was at least the grandson of Robert Gunn as Robert Gunn's son is 'Donald of Braemore.'[271] Lachlan's daughter was obviously at least a further generation along; or the great grandniece of Coroner Gunn if you prefer.

Further problems with the Helen Gunn of Braemore story
The Helen Gunn of Braemore story fails as an historical event.

To begin with Sir Robert Gordon's *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* text includes the death of Coroner Gunn and has much more about the Gunns. His book, though, has no mention of any Helen Gunn of Braemore. If the incident had happened it would be mentioned in that text as the people involved would have been important (especially the Keiths) and the killings / rape / suicide consequently remembered - the killings / rape / suicide are also not mentioned in any other document of the time. The Helen Gunn of Braemore incident not being in Gordon's book is prima facie evidence that the event did not happen. Yes, it happened in Caithness and his book's title only mentioned Sutherland – but the book's content covers Caithness as well as Sutherland and the Helen Gunn of Braemore story would be too well-known to ignore.

[270] From Pages 38-39 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*. A Victorian romantic poem of the myth can be found in Appendix 6. There are many such myths and legends floating around the Caithness / Sutherland area; see J. Westwood and S Kingshill's *The Lore of Scotland A Guide to Scottish Legends.* It's where this story (and much other Gunn 'history') belongs.
[271] Page 271 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

Secondly, if true this story would have been the basis – or a good part - of a feud, however the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments has Ackergill Tower being built about 1500[272] which is significantly *after* the supposed story happened.

Thirdly, Mark Rugg Gunn's view is that Lachlan Gunn was *'a small proprietor in Braemore'*[273] - so why did Braemore need a factor? Factors – estate managers - are normally for large estates not for a 'small proprietor'. No Keith would be a servant at a small estate as the Keiths were important people; Keiths would be more inclined to have Gunns of Braemore as factors on their estate rather than the other way around. And the Keiths had more than enough land at Ackergill – and money - to keep themselves busy without leaving their own land for employment. So, a Keith being Factor at Braemore does not ring true.

Fourthly, in Mark Rugg Gunn's view *'complete lawlessness existed throughout Scotland, and especially north of the Highland border'*[274] at this time which would increase the chance of the Helen Gunn myth being true if his view was accurate. It's not true. Parliaments existed and passed laws,[275] *'the magnates who dominated Scotland's regional societies were in 1400 acutely aware of their ties to king and kingdom'*[276] and the role of Coroner would not have existed in a lawless state yet the position of Caithness Coroner existed from at least 1358.[277] The Caithness Coroner of the Helen of Braemore time would have dealt with the murders / rape / suicide if it had happened, especially as it involved the Keiths. And it would then have been in Gordon's history, and detailed in historical documents. Sure, law and order wasn't perfect but *'complete lawlessness'* was not true, and only *'complete lawlessness'* would allow for the Helen Gunn of Braemore melodrama to be true.

Overall, the supposed Helen of Braemore event should be ignored as it lacks historical evidence; it is nothing but a romantic, melodramatic fiction so loved in Victorian times.

[272] http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/9145/details/ackergill+tower/&biblio=more accessed 7 February 2013.
[273] Page 37, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[274] Page 40, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*.
[275] See eds. Keith M. Brown's and Roland Tanners' *The History of the Scottish Parliament Volume 1; Parliament and Politics in Scotland 1235-1560*.
[276] Chapter 3, M. Brown and S. Boardman, 'Survival and Revival: Late Medieval Scotland' in Ed. Jenny Wormatt, *Scotland A History*.
[277] See chapter 8 and page 86, Ed. Donald Omand, *The New Caithness Book.*

7.3 Another Braemore Gunn story, perhaps from the late 1400s

The following Braemore story (and there are variations) is set after the Coroner's death; it – like the Helen Gunn of Braemore story - lacks supporting evidence. The tale is worthy of an opera and its amorality is interesting. And its amorality involves Braemore Gunns; this story does not reflect well on them. The key figure in this story is a giant over nine feet tall, being but one reason why this story cannot be history. And, of course, this story is not in Sir Robert Gordon's history. Nor can the Robert Gun of the story be historically identified…

The castle of Berrydale, or Berridale, is remarkable on account of its last inhabitant, who was a giant, called William More. His history is singular.

About the end of the fifteenth century or a bit later, Hector Sutherland, commonly called Hector More; or Meikle Hector, was proprietor of of the estate of Langwell. He was descended from the family of Duffus, and resided in a castle on a rock in the water-mouth of Berrydale; the ruins of which are still visible. He built a house at Langwell for his eldest son William, who married a beautiful woman and resided there. Some time afterwards William's wife was in childbed of her first child, and Robert Gun, tacksman of Braemore, came over the hills to Langwell, accompanied by some of his clan, on a hunting party. Robert Gun proposed to his friends they that they would pay a visit to Hector More's son and his young wife; which they accordingly did. Robert Gun, upon seeing the woman in bed, fancied her. Upon their way home, Gun declared to his companions that he would have William Sutherland's wife to himself; and that the only means by which he could accomplish his design was to take away her husband's life. His friends, whose consciences were no more straightlaced than his own, having approved of his intention, they accompanied him the next day over the hills and lay in ambush in the woods near William Sutherland's house, until they observed him come out to the garden, when Robert Gun shot him with an arrow from his bow. They went immediately into his house, took his wife out of bed, and carried her and her infant child in a large basket they had prepared for that purpose to Braemore, where Gun resided. As soon as the mother recovered, she was reconciled to Robert Gun, notwithstanding of his murdering her husband. She begged of him to call her son William after his deceased father, though she knew, had her husband been alive, he would have named him Hector after his own father Hector More. Robert Gun held the lands of Braemore from the Earl of Caithness in tack, but he would pay no rent to his Lordship. After being much in arrear to the Earl, his Lordship sent John Sinclair of Stercock, with a party of men under arms, to compel Gun to make payment; but Gun convened his clan, and they defeated John Sinclair with his party. Several were killed, and John Sinclair was wounded in the engagement. Young William's mother lived the remainder of her life with Robert Gun, and had two sons by him. After these sons had arrived at maturity, young William and they went one day went a-hunting; and William being more successful than the other two killed a roe, which he desired his two brothers carry home. They objected to this drudgery, and said that he might carry home his won prey himself. But William, who by this time had heard of his father's tragical end, told them, with a menacing aspect, that if they would not carry home the roe he would revenge some of their father's actions upon them; which intimidated them greatly (although they were ignorant of the cause of his threatening), as they knew he had more personal styrength than them both, he being then about nine feet high, and stout in proportion. They accordingly carried home the roe, and told their

mother that William had threatened them in such a manner. She communicated this circumstance to their father Robert Gun, adding, that she suspected William had heard of his father's death. Robert Gun, being afraid of young William's personal strength, wished to be in friendship with him, and proposed that he should marry his (Gun's) sister, who resided with them in the character of a housekeeper. William did not relish the match, and would not accept of her. Soon afterwards Robert Gun made a feast at his house, where he collected serval of his friends, and contrived to make young William so much intoxicated that he was carried to bed, and Robert Gun put his sister to bed with him. When William awakened next morning he was surprised to find Gun's sister in bed with him. She told he might recollect that the ceremonies of marriage passed betwixt the preceding evening, and that she was now his lawful spouse. He got up in a passion, and declared that he was imposed upon, and that he would hold no such bargain. Robert Gun flattered him, and said, as he was now married to his sister he would make the match as agreeable as possible, by putting him in possession of the estate of Langwell; and in order to accomplish his promise, he, with a few of his connections, concealed themselves near Hector More's castle on the rock until early in the morning. When the drawbridge was let down, they forced their way into the castle, and carried Hector More (who was then an old feeble man) out of his castle, and left him in a cot-house in the neighbourhood, wher he remained for some little time, and afterwards in Sutherland, and passed the remainder of his days with one of his relations, Sutherland of Rearcher.

Robert Gun then returned in triumph to Braemore, and conducted William Sutherland his espoused wife to their castle, and gave them all the possessions of the estate of Langwell. William being very much dissatisfied with Robert Gun's conduct, and not liking the company of his sister as spouse, went and complained of his grievances to the Earl of Caithness; who promised him redress as soon as he returned from the Orkneys, wher he was going to quell a rebellion, along with the Baron of Roslin, and wished that he (William), being a very stout man, would accompany him. William consented to do so, and returned to Berriedale to bid his friends farewell before he would go on so dangerous an expedition. Just as he was parting with them at the burial ground on the braes at the east side of the water of Berrydale, he told his friends that he suspected he never would return from Orkney. He then laid himself down on the heath near the burial ground, and desired his companions to fix two stones in the ground, the one at his head and the other at his feet, in order to show to posterity his uncommon stature; which stones remain there still;, and the exact difference between them is nine feet and five inches… [278] (He apparently died in the Orkney battles, perhaps in 1530.)

A nine-foot five-inch human? There is no record for such in human history. These Braemore stories cannot be accepted as history.

[278] Pages 19-22, R. Forsyth, *The Beauties of Scotland, Volume V*. Or see pages 131-134 (Eds) D. J Withington and I. R. Grant reprinted version of the 1791-1799 *The Statistical Account of Scotland Volume XVIII Caithness and Sutherland.*

8. Coroner Gunn of Caithness: the first Gunn in history

There is much to be said about the first Gunn known in history and who was important until around 1452 (see chapter 8.3) namely the Gunn who held the position of coroner of Caithness.

The spelling of coroner was not fixed at this time; dictionaries had not been invented so coroner appeared as crowner in some documents but both words apply to the same position. Professor Houston in his work *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300-1700* makes it clear that the positions are the same; *''what people called 'coroners' or 'crowners' (or variant spellings thereof) … in Scotland…'*.[279] To make his point more clear - *'Closely connected with the sheriff was the CROWNER or CORONER.'*[280] The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* also has a meaning for Crowner as *'= Coroner'*[281]. Mark Rugg Gunn also makes the point *'Crowner … is the same word as Coroner'*.[282] The title of Professor Houston's book is the point *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300-1700* – the legal position is 'Coroner.'

Those who use a two syllable 'crown / er' for the position of coroner may hope a regal 'Crown' can be added somehow to Clan Gunn history to make it seem more glamorous and significant. Such a two-syllable pronunciation of the word is just wrong; the misspelling of coroner is pronounced in three syllables. The 'c / row / ner' pronounced syllables are 'K', 'row' as in rowing boat, and 'ner' – Coroner.

Note that Coroner Gunn has stories attached to him about the brooch he wore, probably associated with the office he held. He was never called Chief of the Clan Gunn in the various histories I have read; again, showing that his supposed position of Chief has no basis.

Coroner Gunn[283] was, though, the first Gunn to definitely emerge into history which is much more important.

[279] Page 3 and page 39, R. A. Houston *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300 – 1700.*
[280] Page 31, A. Jeffrey, *The History and Antiquities of Roxburghshire and Adjacent Districts; From the Most Remote Period to the Present Time Vol. 2*.
[281] Page 464, *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary on Historical Principles, Volume 1. 3rd Edition.*
[282] Page 43, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[283] Michael J Gunn has written about Coroner Gunn and much else in his https://www.academia.edu/43084208/Crowners_of_Caithness. It has some solid research but too often falls into the trap of being a 'glorification text' – many historic assumptions exist and are considered to be historic facts. The Gunns are also meant to 'probably' descend from Snaekoll Gunnarson's brother Andrs but no proof is offered that Andrs made it to Scotland. As said often in this text – we have no idea of Coroner Gunn's first name, let alone his parental names so how one can claim family going back many generations is beyond me.

8.1 The position and significance of a Coroner

Duties of a Coroner

The position of Coroner in Scottish law in Coroner Gunn's time had - in essence – nothing to do with coroner under English or American law as we view it today. The coroner's position was secondary to the Sheriff of an area[284] and the Sheriff was *'on a par with the provincial earls and lords.'*[285]

Professor R. A. Houston writes that the Scottish coroner position *'dealt more with living miscreants and their assets than with bodies and goods of the dead; they were men of action who had a robust role in the administration of justice…. Scottish coroners functioned as executive judicial officers who serviced circuit courts which dealt especially (if not exclusively prior to 1532) with criminal matters'* [286] and that Scottish coroners '*arrested suspects and seized goods on behalf of the king's judges. They dealt with the living rather than with the wrongfully dead. They also had quasi-military functions and some powers of summary justice*[287] *when maintaining law and order…'*.[288] Coroners *'were executive legal officers or bailiffs… and received securities from litigants, arrested (cited) indicted criminals, enforced attendance at hearings, or seized forfeited goods in cases involving breach of the king's peace...'*[289]

The '*Coroner's main role was protecting the king's financial interests so he* (the king) *could profit from potentially lucrative revenues like the confiscation of property of felons and the forfeiture of sureties, but their job was also to bring the king's justice into the localities. Unpopular they may sometimes have been…'*[290] That makes sense as confiscating property, arresting people so they are jailed, killing people etc. is rarely appreciated by the families of those so dealt with, especially in the mid-1400s with no social security. This role was echoed in the legal system of England and Wales 1063-1284; *'justice in medieval times was a source of profit to the king.'*[291] The position of Scottish coroner could be *'fluid'*[292] *– 'what a holder made of his job depended on his personality and that of his immediate superior, as well as the circumstances in which both operated.'*[293] Houston also notes *'The title invested its holder with authority while physical symbol such as brooch, wand, porteous roll or halberd (the coroner had the right to bear arms…) publicly intimated status.'*[294] Here we probably see the origin of the 'great brooch' stories[295] which are attached to Coroner Gunn; presumably it was his badge[296] of coronial office.

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[284] 'The Scottish Sherriff was, from the twelfth century, 'the king's judicial, financial, administrative officer'. Page 2, R. A. Houston *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300 – 1700.*

[285] See http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/633/1/Grant_Franchises.pdf accessed 2 April 2019.

[286] Page 3, R. A. Houston *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300 – 1700.*

[287] Summary justice? That means killing people.

[288] Page 38, R. A. Houston *ibid.*

[289] Page 55, R. A. Houston *ibid.*

[290] Page 44, R. A. Houston *ibid.*

[291] Page 147, A.H. William *An Introduction to the History of Wales, Volume II, Part I 1063-1284.*

[292] Page 46, R. A. Houston *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300 – 1700.*

[293] Page 52, R. A. Houston *ibid.*

[294] Page 70, R. A. Houston *ibid.*

[295] Page 14, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns.*

[296] Was it anything more than *'In wet weather, the plaid was thrown loose, and covered both shoulders and body; and when the use of both arms were required, it was fastened across the breast by a large silver bodkin, or circular brooch, often enriched with precious stones, or imitations of them, having mottos engraved, consisting of allegorical and figurative sentences. These were also employed to fix the plaid on the left shoulder.'* Pp. 77-78, Col. David Stewart *Sketches of the Highlanders of Scotland, Vol.1.* In other words; due to his job of

And then there is the question of the Sheriff who was legally superior to the coroner. A fact concerning the Caithness coroner is in a 1358 letter[297] by King David of Scotland which pointed out that a hundred or so years before Gunn was coroner in Caithness the position of Caithness coroner existed but the quotation below shows the coroner's superiors the Sheriff and bailies lived in Inverness whilst only the coroner was in Caithness. The king expected the coroner to have responsibility for proclaiming that no-one would go to the Orkney Islands for any reason other than pilgrimage or business reasons – and if they did such people would lose 'all'.

Letters: letters patent to the sheriff and bailies of Inverness and the coroner of Caithness to make public proclamation forbidding entrance to Orkney

David, by the grace of God king of Scots, to his sheriff, bailies of Inverness and their lieutenants or lieutenant, and the coroner of Caithness to whom the present letters shall come, greeting. We order and command you that, as quickly and as often as you shall be asked you shall cause to be forbidden and publicly proclaimed in burghs, courts and public places in our name, that nobody of whatever status he be should presume to enter the lands or harbours of Orkney in any way, except by reason of pilgrimage or for carrying out trade, or in other peaceful and lawful business, under pain of losing all which may be lost to our royal majesty. In testimony of which matter we have ordered our seal to be appended to the present letters in patent form. At Scone in our parliament held in the same place, 18 November in the twenty-ninth year of our reign [18 November 1358].

And this continued in Coroner Gunn's time. The Sheriff with jurisdiction for Caithness was in Inverness so Coroner Gunn would at least for some of the time - if not all of the time – have some sort of quasi-Sheriff authority. The courts certainly visited Caithness from the 1260s[298] on (and there is record that in 1263-66, at least, the Court at Inverness involved Caithness people[299]) but it seems that was the job of an itinerant justiciar (a justiciar was more important than a coroner[300]) paid for by the Sheriff. Caithness was legally separated from Inverness only in 1503[301] which is after Coroner Gunn's time. So, given the quasi-Sheriff aspect and the lack of an Earl, Coroner Gunn was more than an everyday coroner and was the King's representative (after all, the King would have appointed him.)

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arresting people, the coroner required both arms to be free and so always wore a brooch. As well, see page 14 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* where he quotes the *'great brooch which he wore as the badge or cognizance of his office of coroner.'*

[297] David II: Translation; 1358, 12 November, Scone, Parliament; Parliamentary Records; 18 November 1358; Letters: letters patent to the sheriff and bailies of Inverness and the coroner of Caithness to make public proclamation forbidding entrance to Orkney; 1358 / 11 / 2.

[298] Page 238 Alice Taylor, *The Shape of Medieval Scotland*.

[299] Page 235 Alice Taylor, *ibid.*

[300] *'Coroners remained under the control of justiciars until at least the sixteenth century'*. Page 55 R. A. Houston *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300 – 1700.*

[301] Page 56 R. A. Houston. *ibid.*

An earlier Caithness coroner

A 1438 Retour of Inquest relating to Caithness is discussed by Mark Rugg Gunn, and was based on the Gunn papers of 1911.[302] It says that a Magnus Crowner (Coroner) lived and had sons including Thomas. Mark Rugg Gunn's view is *'that this document can be disregarded'*[303] for Gunn history and I agree. There is no mention of these 'Crowner' names in any other Gunn history – or myth - and no Gunn surname is given for the 'Crowner'. So why should it be Gunn? 'Crowner' is a position and there is no support for the Caithness coronial position being inherited although it might occasionally be so.[304] There is also no known link to show this 'Magnus Crowner' was the same person as Coroner Gunn and so the document probably applied to an earlier holder of the coronial position. In other words, just because there may have been a document which mentioned a 'Crowner' of Caithness near the right time period does not mean that 'Crowner' was Coroner Gunn.

As well, the years are a problem – Coroner Gunn was operating in Caithness but dead by 1452, see chapter 8.2**.** If the Retour of 1438 applied to Coroner Gunn it meant he would have been Coroner of Caithness for about fifteen years from the say mid-1430s to 1452ish. That seems a long period for such a senior, physically demanding position especially as the Retour has Thomas being adult in 1438. So Magnus, father of Thomas, would have to be say around forty–five years of age; one doubts he could still be Coroner in his late fifties even if he was alive. As such, the 1438 document cannot apply to Coroner Gunn.

Of course, one gets back to the key problem – we have no idea who Coroner Gunn's parents or grandparents were so to link him back to earlier generations is fantasy. And there is no support for the idea that the Coroner of Caithness was an heritable position for hundreds of years. See Chapter XXX on the early 'Gunn Chiefs.' If the position of 'Coroner' was inheritable by other Gunns then the word 'Coroner' would have been attached to them in the earlier years – look at how the title stuck to the first Coroner. 'MacHamish' would not have been needed – but MacHamish was used for hundreds of years.

A later Caithness coroner

There are legal documents which relate to a coroner of Caithness; the key point is which coroner.

From a 1456 inventory of the goods of the Earl of Caithness's late father-in law, namely Alexander Sutherland, there is mention of *'Alexander the Crouner's son' as owing for the tiend*[305] *of Dale, Thurso and the river with other goods that he tuk of myn that comes to 24 merks and mair'*, while *'Henry, the Crounar's son'* also owed for tiends and cattle that he had taken *'40 merks and mer'*.[306] The will, to

[302] Page 35 Mark Rugg Gunn *Clan Gunn* and see http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-1111911-and-821911.html accessed 29 May 2017 for the 1911 newspaper report.
[303] Page 35 Mark Rug Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[304] The position of coroner could be inherited, especially by those with estates and castles which Gunns did not have. The position seems more often to be a personal appointment than inherited. See Chapter 3 'Scottish Coroners; Origins and Development of the Office' R. A. Houston *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300 – 1700.*
[305] Tiends are 'tithes' for maintaining the clergy. Dale and Thurso being churches, or Church regions.
[306] Page 67 https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=36T5QWT70dYC&pg=PA67&lpg=PA67&dq=henry+crounar%27s+son&source=bl&ots=2oqocnSKDF&sig=ACfU3U3bHbzOh8xbmeXxhrMaCf0iOc1iBQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwibn-Tz5rbhAhW8TxUIHUeRB9cQ6AEwAHoECAcQAQ#v=onepage&q=henry%20crounar's%20son&f=false accessed 4 April 2019.

which the inventory relates, has an item; *'I leave to the Crowner a horse.'*[307] Remember that Sir Robert Gordon pointed out that Coroner Gunn was flourishing when there were no Earls – and this inventory is from the Earl of Caithness's father-in-law. If an Earl exists then Coroner Gunn does not. This means that the 'Crowner' mentioned was not Coroner Gunn but the Coroner who probably succeeded him; the position of coroner could be inherited but mainly it was not so inherited. As well, a new Coroner would require a horse (or further horse?) to get around Caithness to do his duty. A new coroner implies that the Alexander and Henry so mentioned are also not Gunns.

These later documents can be ignored for Gunn history.

8.2 Coroner Gunn; name and life

Name

It is worth restating that we have no idea who Coroner Gunn's parents were so to link him to earlier supposed Gunn Chiefs or earlier Caithness Coroners (there is no support for the Caithness Coroner title being inherited[308]) is ridiculous. We also don't know his first name. Some people have used 'George' but 'George' with its links to England's 'St. George' seems an improbable name for the Scottish Highlands in the 1400s as Caithness was more Gaelic / Norse, than Anglo-Norman. One suspects George has no factual origin but was used to humanise the important but un-named Gunn and to soften history by anglicising a key figure. Mark Rugg Gunn's view is that George *'appears to be traditional rather than founded on fact'*[309] - as it's not a fact it should not be used. It was possibly due to confusion when transcribing an early document, with the name George Crichton and then people over time repeating that error.[310]

Life

It is impossible to exactly pin down when Gunn was coroner of Caithness but he died no later than June 1452[311] as Sir Robert Gordon makes clear as he wrote that when the Coroner was alive *'he floorished (as) there wes no Earle of Catteynes, that earldome being yit in the king's hands, and was thereafter given to William Sinckler.'*[312] That makes sense - the stories attached to Coroner Gunn's power are logical only when he was in charge of Caithness; that is, before the Earls of Caithness took over as he would have not had the amount of power or fame attributed to him when Earls were around as he would have been subordinate to them. The word 'floorished' is key; Coroner Gunn was alive and busy before the Earldom of Caithness was recreated in June 1452.

The Earldom of Caithness was held by the King from 1375 to 1452. Technically the title was held by various royals 1375-1434 with the title in abeyance 1434-1452. It was recreated in June 1452 for Sir

[307] Page 164, Iain Moncrieffe of that Ilk, *The Highland Clans; the dynastic origins, chiefs, and background of the clans and of some other families connected with Highland history*.
[308] Michael J. Gunn in his *The Crowners of Caithness* makes many assertions otherwise; the lack of paperwork of the time supporting his assertions is a notable problem.
[309] Page 44, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[310] Page 53 Michael J. Gunn in his *The Crowners of Caithness.*
[311] Page 93 Sir Robert Sinclair, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[312] Page 93 Sir Robert Sinclair, *ibid.*

George Crichton who resigned it back to the King before Crichton's death in August 1454. It is unclear if Sir George Crichton ever visited Caithness. There was then a brief gap before the *'William Sinckler'* (William Sinclair) mentioned by Sir Robert Gordon was created Earl of Caithness on 28 August 1455. The lack of mention of Sir George Crichton is unimportant, as said it is not even clear he made Caithness as he was a very busy man; Gordon's use of *'floorished'* is a word one would not use for a period of just one year so it does not mean the gap between August 1454 and August 1455.

So, Coroner Gunn died before June 1452; the implication of Gordon's *'thereafter'* suggests he died some time before an Earldom was recreated so Coroner Gunn may have died a little earlier than June 1452.

But what would Gunn have needed as Coroner? He needed somewhere to live, to hold prisoners in jail, somewhere to store confiscated goods and somewhere to entertain visiting justiciars etc.. He would also have needed somewhere which suited the importance of his position. His accommodation was never the supposed Gunn castles; they are too small and more fortified farmhouses. See chapter 8.5. But with no Earl of Caithness in place - and no Sheriff - it seems reasonable that a castle associated with the Earldom be used by Gunn as he was also acting as Sheriff(ish) and Earl(ish) – and being the King's representative. But which castle? Castle Sinclair Girnigoe is associated with the Earls of Caithness and that castle is known to have been built on an older castle.[313] That older castle might be where Gunn lived. Or was it Wick castle? The castle used by Coroner Gunn is unclear; it's the principle that Gunn would have used an existing castle - and not a 'Gunn castle' - which is important. Sir Robert Gordon provides support for Coroner Gunn using Castle Sinclair Girnigoe, see chapter 8.3.

Did Hugh MacDonald of Sleat visit Coroner Gunn?

Such a castle is important because it provides support for the possible visit of Hugh Macdonald of Sleat's – Sleat is on Skye on the west coast of Scotland – visit to Coroner Gunn. One version is -

(Hugh) *stopped at Caithness where Hugh was entertained by a member of the Clan Gunn who was the Crowner of the region. Gunn's hospitality was lavish, and during the visit Hugh is said to have formed a "matrimonial alliance" with his daughter.*[314]

There is no mention of this event in Sir Robert Gordon's history, the event only appears in much later histories. There is general acceptance that Hugh MacDonald of Sleat had a son from an unknown Gunn – the son was Donald Gallach. There is some consideration that it was with Coroner Gunn's daughter.[315] If it was the Coroner's daughter it makes sense for Hugh to have visited the Coroner; a girl would not be sent to the other side of the country at this time. There is, however, no record of a marriage between a female Gunn and Hugh MacDonald. Some argue that Hugh visited the Coroner in 1460[316] but this goes against Gordon's comment that Coroner Gunn lived when there were no Earls of

[313] See http://www.caithness.org/caithness/castles/sinclairgirnigoe/ accessed 28 May 2017 and http://her.highland.gov.uk/SingleResult.aspx?uid=%27MHG417%27 accessed 29 June 2017.
[314] Page 397 Donald J. MacDonald of Castleton, *Clan Donald*.
[315] Page 49, Mark Rugg Gunn, Clan Gunn.
[316] Page 49, Mark Rugg Gunn *ibid.*

Caithness and William Sinclair was created Earl of Caithness on 28 August 1455 – and the Coroner was dead by 1452, as already discussed.

The 1460 date is also unlikely as the Earl of Caithness excused himself from visiting Norway in that year (the Earl of Caithness was also Earl – Jarl – of the Orkney Islands at this time so also owed allegiance to the King of Norway as well as to the Scottish King) as he was too busy dealing with his *'old great enemy'*[317] namely John McDonald Lord of the Isles (being Hugh of Sleat's older brother). John MacDonald was a slippery character[318] – sometimes he was in open revolt against the King of Scotland and sometimes not, but John MacDonald was also happy to raid the Orkney Islands. In July 1462 he even went into alliance with England against the Scottish King aiming for full independence. This alliance failed and meant the end of John MacDonald's power.

What this meant for Hugh MacDonald is simple – his family was questionable and so was he. The only reason offered for the 1460 date was that *'Hugh made a successful raid in the Orkneys'*[319] in June 1461.[320] In other words Hugh attacked part of the Earl of Caithness and Jarl of Orkney's land. Hugh could hardly visit the Coroner of Caithness (if the Coroner had been alive then) after committing the violence; it would have been the Coroner's responsibility to arrest him and his crew, not feed and water them – and certainly not to allow his daughter to go off with Hugh. As well, it was usual for successful warriors to return to their homes after battle, in this case on the west coast of Scotland rather than go down to Caithness for a social visit especially as there had been *'great slaughter.'*[321]

Did Hugh really 'get involved' with a daughter of Coroner Gunn before the Coroner died in 1452? I suspect not. There was no reason for his Lord of the Isles line to go visiting the east coast of Scotland as they had their own massive estates on the west coast to look after, and I can find no record of them so visiting the Scottish east coast. As well Hugh would be young; he was probably born somewhere around 1436[322] so making him no more than sixteen.

Another view says Hugh *'married, secondly, a lady of the Clan Gunn of Caithness'*.[323] Given the time a second marriage is possible and note the words the *'lady of the Clan Gunn of Caithness'* – it does not say Coroner's daughter. Was she even a 'Gunn of Caithness'? She may have been a female Irish Gunn and Irish Gunns do not have a link with Highland Gunns.

Overall, I accept Hugh had a child by a Gunn, probably out of marriage. I suspect it was not from the Coroner's daughter but more likely a Gunn from the west coast of Scotland, and that time has merged this early female Gunn into supposedly being the Coroner's daughter. She was certainly the first historically known female Gunn…

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[317] Page 197, W.P.L. Thompson, *The New History of the Orkneys.*
[318] Page 451 https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=TYnfhTq2M7EC&pg=PA415&dq=John+MacDOnald+1434+1503&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj0js6vy7bhAhUCsXEKHQCaBmwQ6AEIKjAA#v=onepage&q=John%20MacDOnald%201434%201503&f=false accessed 4 April 2019.
[319] Page 49, Mark Rugg Gunn *Clan Gunn.*
[320] Page 197, W.P.L. Thompson, *The New History of the Orkneys.*
[321] Page 197, W.P.L. Thompson, *ibid.*
[322] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_of_Sleat for one example.
[323] Page 87, Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the MacDonalds and Lords of the Isles.*

8.3 Coroner Gunn's death c. early 1450s

Tradition is the only authority we have for the fact of this conflict having really taken place.
Donald Sage[324]

There has been an enormous amount written about Coroner Gunn's death and there are many variations of the story. The logical way to think about Coroner Gunn's death is to consider the earliest account of it which was written by Sir Robert Gordon about one hundred and seventy years or so after the event. His account of the *'battle of St Tayr'* in Caithness is[325] -

After some dissention between the Kaithes and the Clangun, ther was a meitting appointed for ther reconciliation at the chappll of St Tayr in Catteynes, not farr from Girnigo, wher they should meitt, with twelve hors on either syd. The Cruner … with the most pairt of his sone and principall kinsmen, came at the appointed time to this chappell, to the number of twelve; and as they were within the cheappell at their prayers, the Laird of Innervgie and Ackrigell arrived ther, with tuelve hors, and two men vpon upon everie hors. So these tuentie-four men rushed in at the door of the chappell and invaded the Cruner and his company at Vnawars (unawares), who nevertheless made great resistance. In end, the Clangun were slain, and the most pairt of the Kaiths also … James Gun, the Cruner his sone, being absent, and hearing of his father's death, retired himself and his famile into Sutherland, wher he settled himself, and begat this William Mack-James… [326]

So, to restate Gordon's account of the Coroner's death; there were problems between Coroner Gunn and local Keiths, a meeting for a reconciliation of the two sides was arranged to be held in St Tayre's[327] Church with twelve horse for each side, Coroner Gunn with *'most part of his'* sons and kinsmen arrived before the Keiths and went into the church. Then a Keith, Laird of Inverugie and Ackergill, arrived with two men on each horse and killed all the Gunns who were in the church, but suffered heavy losses whilst doing so. The Coroner's son James was not there and after this battle moved to Sutherland with his family. Note that Gordon points out that St Tayr was not far from Girnigoe (castle). There is no reason for this information to be added bar that it hints that Coroner Gunn was living at Girnigoe Castle which is a point I have already discussed.

In other words, Gordon says all the Gunns were killed at this battle, including the most part of the Coroner's sons and principal kinsmen. And the killing of these Gunns was by the local branch of the Keith family.

[324] Page 65, Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica.* Other families / clans have similar unverifiable horror stories set in the past; the supposed suffocation of followers of Clanranald of Eigg on Canna in the late 1500s is but one example. See page 39-40, J. L. Campbell, *Canna The Sory of a Hebridean Island.* It is as if the story tellers of old knew that a horror story was required to be added to a 'history'…
[325] This version is also used in *The Feuds of the Clans*, by Rev. Alexander MacGregor.
[326] Page 92, Sir Robert Gordon *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[327] One view is that the spelling should be *'Chapel of Teer'*; *'Teer being a Caithness form of Deer … the abbot of Deer (Aberdeenshire) had lands and tenants in Caithness'.* See http://docplayer.net/96111001-Page-1-of-66-j-woodside-together-in-christ-following-the-northern-saints-p-3-2.html accessed 5 March 2019.

Much later versions of the event say the killing was organised by the Chief of the Clan Keith (Sir William Keith Marischal of Scotland died in 1444, with what would now be viewed as severe dementia from at least 1442. His eldest son Sir Robert Keith died in 1446 at Strachan.[328] The next Head of the Clan Keith dies significantly after 1452 and there is no record any of them living or visiting Caithness) and that some sons of Coroner Gunn survived and took revenge on the Keiths including killing this important Chief of the Clan Keith. These embellished stories should be ignored; Gordon's account (as it is the earliest known by many, many years) is either accurate or it is not, one cannot randomly add to it.

Is Gordon's account of the Coroner's death totally accurate?[329] He was not, after all, there at the time. He wrote of an event which had been remembered in oral history; Gordon's book was the first written history. One should reject facts not provided by Gordon but it is also right to question that which he wrote as his was not a first-hand account. Gordon is certainly not perfect – for example, he wrote that *'Clan-gun (are named)… from one called Gun, whom they alledge to have been the king of Denmark his son, and came many days agoe from Denmark and settled himself in Catteyness'*[330] which as an origin for Clan Gunn is supported by no-one.

The problems with Gordon's account of the death of Coroner Gunn are -

1) Concerning the Church of St Tayr. It would be useful to have a record showing that St Tayr was definitely in existence in the 1440s / early 1450s. The Church may have been there, but then again it may not have been. The RCAHMS[331] does not assign a period to it.

The first record of the church is in 1762 by Bishop Forbes who described it as '*very singular* (small)'[332] – POWiS (Places of Worship in Scotland) gives the Chapel measurements[333] of forty-seven feet by twenty-seven feet six inches or, if you like about fourteen and a third metres by eight and a half metres so how on earth are the thirty six Gunn / Keith men fighting to the death in it? Consider the furniture in the church as well. It's physically impossible I would suggest, even allowing for the smaller body size of those years. Why would the Keiths enter such a small space to fight? Much easier to just wait at the door and kill those trying to escape, or burn the chapel down. The tiny size of St Tears places a question mark over whether any battle occurred inside the Church.

And why would Coroner Gunn be praying in such a tiny rural church? All castles have chapels, Coroner Gunn lived in a castle with, presumably, his own cleric – or at least one deputed to serve his chapel. If Coroner Gunn had wanted prayers it would have been held in his own castle chapel, with his

[328] See Thomas Innes 'The First Earl Marischal' in the 1927 'The Scottish Historical Review Vol. 24.' Thomas Innes was later a Lord Lyon.
[329] Building on some ideas raised at http://ramscraigs.com/?cat=13.
[330] Page 92-93, Sir Robert Gordon *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[331] RCAHMS being the Royal Commission for the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland, https://canmore.org.uk/site/9146/shorelands-sttears-chapel accessed 7 June 2017.
[332] Bishop Forbes 1762, see http://www.scottishchurches.org.uk/sites/site/id/307/name/St+Tears+Chapel%2C+Wick+Wick+Highland accessed 28 June 2017.
[333] http://www.scottishchurches.org.uk/sites/site/id/307/name/St+Tears+Chapel%2C+Wick+Wick+Highland accessed 28 June 2017.

own cleric and done in style worthy of his importance in Caithness. The rural church prayer idea seems like a bit of later public relations spin.

If the tiny Church was meant to have been chosen as neutral territory for a place for discussion between rival groups then that seems illogical as it was too small, and unimportant, a place for such a meeting (he was the Coroner after all, and the Keiths were important local aristocracy); a much larger, more important Church would have been found.

And why was there no lookout at the Chapel given the problems associated with this supposed event and so stop the sneaky Keiths? The Coroner was not an innocent;[334] he was obviously good at his important job which required a man of action. The lack of a lookout also suggests the story was invented.

But were the Gunns attacked near the church? That's possible – and the church was perhaps the nearest geographical landmark to where the battle happened. The remains of the church are about halfway between the Keiths of Ackergill and Castle Sinclair Girnigoe which is where I think Coroner Gunn lived. The church is, more importantly, on the way from Castle Sinclair Girnigoe to just about anywhere in Caithness as the Castle is situated to the north of Wick on an isolated bay. People would have known the track the Gunns used to leave or return to their castle – and it was and still is – an empty land.

I find the likelihood that the Gunns were attacked in the church hugely unlikely but them being attacked near the church seems quite possible.

2) **Concerning the Keiths.** The idea of Keiths being 'honourable' and so riding two fighting men on a horse (there are other Scottish myths like this story)[335] to the Gunn battle, then consequently being hugely dishonourable by killing the Gunns in church lacks logic. The Church had its own power and such sacrilege as the St Tayr killings would have been known; Keiths would be in the religious records and probably would have had to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, or something equivalent, to redeem themselves after desecrating a holy place. So, again the Keith / Gunn battle in the church doesn't ring true – a battle near it again seems more likely.

[334] Many of the reports of this battle suffer from wish fulfilment; an example is *'The Crowner was doubtless keen to come to terms with the Keiths ... and to preserve his own status and save his people ... For this purpose he agreed to meet the Keiths...'* Page 49, Mark Rugg Gunn, *History of the Clan Gunn*. We do not have any primary source justification for the Coroner / Crowner's thought process.

[335] The 'treachery' part of the Gunn / Keith fiction is the same as in so many other clan myths – I recommend the tale of Lochiel Chief of Clan Cameron and Atholl head of the Roberstons (Clan Donnachaidh) who had fought each other for many years but finally supposedly decided to try and talk it out by themselves, but guess what, they both cheat and have hidden supporters ready for battle and one has more than twice as many as the others… Page 84, Stuart MacHardy *The Well of the Heads And Other Tales of Scottish Clans.* Sound familiar? What about two men on each horse? It's in the *Orkneyinga Saga* – there is a battle between Sigurd the Mighty Earl of Orkney and Mael Brigte a Pictish nobleman, perhaps a Mormaer of Moray. And Sigurd supposedly brought two men on each horse for the forty-horse a side battle and easily won. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%A1el_Brigte_of_Moray for a simple summary. Or pages 83-4 James Hunter *Last of the Free; A History of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.* In James Hunter's view about this battle between Sigurd and Mael Brigte *'Such ...tales ought not to be taken literally.'* I worry when one side loses due to treachery by the other side; it sounds like a fictional excuse for incompetence. I am far more confident with history when a fair fight has happened and one side just loses.

The argument that the battle was result of a longstanding Gunn / Keith feud I have shown to be highly unlikely – see chapter 7.

Overall, I find this Gunn / Keith battle impossible to believe; Coroner Gunn represented the King in Caithness, and the local Keiths were a significant part of one of the most important families in Caithness and Scottish history – around 1350 John Keith, being the second son of Edward Keith, Marischall of Scotland, married Mary Cheyne owner of Ackergill and Inverugie and it all became 'Keith land'. Both Coroner Gunn and the Keiths were extremely socially significant and both represented law and order; neither Coroner Gunn nor the Keiths were hillbilly feud families. Keiths and Coroner Gunn's family were families of importance; they would be more inclined to support each other than kill each other. As well, Coroner Gunn was the representative of law and order in Caithness; an important family could not expect to kill him and get away with it. It would have made the historic records of the day; by contrast the extended feud which started around 1490 between the Campbells, Drummonds, MacGregors, MacLarens and Grahams is 'recorded chapter by chapter in the parliament and privy council papers of Scotland'.[336]

3) Consequences of the event. Gordon gives no consequences for this death which at first thought seems unusual. But although the position was significant it was not an inherited position – the main concern would have been to appoint a new coroner. As well, Caithness was not the Royal Court at Edinburgh; was the murder meant to have been tidied up when an Earl was appointed? If the Earl had known that it was the Keiths he could easily have arranged for them to be arrested and take over Ackergill for the King; but this did not happen. The Earl had the power to do this; the lack of such an event again suggests that the Keiths did not kill the Gunns.

But is the lack of consequence for the murder of Coroner Gunn due to something simple? Coroner Gunn was about arresting rogues and criminals; local Caiths if you like. The idea that Coroner Gunn died in a brawl / battle with a group of Caiths[337] (not Keiths) - Caithness people – probably because of his role as Coroner is more logical than an attack by Keiths. As Professor Houston said; coroners could be *'unpopular'*[338] – had Coroner Gunn annoyed too many people for too many years by arbitrary behaviour? Do not forget the coroner had powers of arrest, property confiscation, some aspects (at least) of summary justice, and was without anyone to restrict his behaviour. Was the Coroner trying to arrest some Caiths but ran into trouble? Had some Caiths enough of the Coroner's behaviour – it would not take much for Coroner Gunn to be seen as tyrannical – and so decide to surprise and kill him?

If Coroner Gunn and the other Gunns were killed by a group of Caithness people then it would explain the reason for the attack, and provide a reason for lack of any known consequence as without knowledge of who the murderers had been, no action could readily be taken.

SUMMARY It is not finally clear who killed the Coroner Gunn but logic suggests he was murdered by some Caithness people, probably near St Tayr's Church around 1450.

[336] See pages 267-268, Rory Stewart *The Marches*.
[337] Do not forget that spelling is not fixed at this time; Keith and Caith sound the same and might have been written the same way.
[338] Page 39 and page 44 R. A. Houston *The Coroners of Northern Britain c. 1300 – 1700.*

8.4 Coroner Gunn's children

Coroner Gunn's children are problematic in name, order and number. Other than the first two sons they are of little significance bar for those who believe in septs but one view is that *'septs were a Victorian invention'*.[339] Sir Robert Gordon's account of Coroner Gunn's death said that '*most pairt of his* (Coroner's) *sone and principall kinsmen'* were killed so some of the extensive lists of the Coroner's children seem unlikely. I discuss the Sept question further in chapter 11.8.

The first two sons were James and Robert; the property they have after the Coroner's death suggest they were the two oldest members of the Coroner's family in that it is fair to assume that the oldest (and presumably strongest) got most property.

The 1896[340] tree records Coroner Gunn's children, in order, as –

- James of Killernan. See chapter 10.
- Robert of Braemore, sometimes called Robson Gunns. Some question the Braemore for Robert and attach that estate to his eldest son but given the money involved in getting the wadset of an estate I suspect Braemore is best attached to Robert. See chapter 11.1.
- William, *'Gunn ancestor of the Williamsons of Bankirk'* (Banniskirk?)
- The 1868 / 1870 trees (see chapter 9.2) record John as the third son of the Coroner ('from whom Cattaig Gunns')
- The fourth son was Alexander (Dale) died in 1456.
- The fifth son was Torquil *'died of his wounds.'*
- The sixth son was Henry Gunn (Dale). The 1868 / 1870 family trees have Strathalladale and Forsinard as places attached to this line.
- One daughter of the Coroner – Mary? - married Hugh McDonald of Slate (Sleat), Isle of Skye.
- There was, perhaps, a further daughter of the Coroner - Binie? Of Blaglaton?

Many other suggestions and orders for the children are known.

This text is about core Gunn issues, not about getting lost in the midst of myriad possibilities for Coroner Gunn's children. I accept James as first son and Robert as second but the rest have, in essence, faded from history. I certainly question whether a daughter married Hugh MacDonald of Sleat; see chapter 8.2.

[339] https://www.scotclans.com/what-is-a-clan-by-dr-bruce-durie/ accessed 6 April 2019.
[340] See section 9.1 for discussion of this tree.

8.5 The supposed Coroner Gunn castle(s)

Castle Gunn … Of historical records there are none.[341]

Lovely word castles; it evokes all sorts of splendour and glory however the supposed Gunn castles are not castles as, firstly, they are far too small; they are, at best, fortified farm houses. But these Gunn supposed fortified houses are, if they existed, so small that they do not appear in Nigel Tranter's monumental five volume work called *The Fortified House in Scotland*; by implication the Gunn 'castles' lacked significance if they ever existed. Volume 5 dealt with North and West Scotland.

Before discussing the two castles normally wrongly linked with the Gunns it is sensible to dispose of two[342] others which are occasionally linked with the Gunns. The first of these is Dirlot castle.[343] This castle is normally associated with the Cheynes; given that the Cheynes are known to be extremely wealthy landowners and the Gunns have no primary source material associated with them at this time, let alone with them having a castle, it is reasonable to ignore these occasional much later references to Gunns at Dirlot castle. In terms of Coroner Gunn a Dirlot castle would certainly be irrelevant as it was so far from the main Caithness area.

Donald Sage also makes reference[344] to a ruined 'castle' at Kinbrace known as *'crown-laird.*' Canmore[345] – the 'National Record of the Historic Environment' of Scotland – says of the name where the ruin is that *'it is said to mean 'the old field' or 'the old cairns.'* There is no support for Sage's view that it was a 'castle' – as well it is too far from the main part of Caithness for it to have any relevance for Coroner Gunn who after all had a major job to do in Caithness, not inland Sutherland. Sage did not link his castle to the Gunns.

One also has to remember that we have no idea who Coroner Gunn's parents were; we would know of them if they had a Gunn castle. The reality is that Coroner Gunn had a castle provided due to his position so it was not really a 'Gunn castle.'

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There are two castles often wrongly linked to the Gunns, one at Bulnacraig and the other at Halberry.

Gunn's castle (Bulnacraig)

This castle is described by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland as *'a small rectangular keep about 37 by 23ft with walls some 3ft thick on a peninsular rock isolate by a wall built on a rock shelf. Immediately outside the building at the NE angle is a circular*

[341] Page 159, Ed. D. Omand, *The New Caithness Book.*
[342] Page 9, Michael J. Gunn, *The Crowners of Caithness,* suggests Duncansby, Freswick and Brough Castle as possibilities. They all seem too far away from the main urban areas of Caithness.
[343] See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clan_Gunn#Castles accessed 5 February 2013.
[344] Page 61, Thomas Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica.*
[345] https://canmore.org.uk/site/6653/kinbrace accessed 23 September 2018.

depression some 9ft in diameter and 2 to 3ft deep, probably indicating a well ...1911 ... the alleged wall is probably a sink-hole caused by drainage through a rock fault. Date not ascertained.'[346]

So this Gunn 'castle' was a building of 37 feet by 23 feet (11.3 metres by 7 metres); we are not talking motte and bailey castles here, we are talking more a very large room. In some ways it's sensible to view it as a defensive tower house or farm house. Even Mark Rugg Gunn finds that '*it is hard to believe that this abode was used for any length of time or as a permanent residence*.'[347] One surely needs it to be large enough for a permanent residence for it to qualify as a castle.

Halberry Castle / Cruner Gunn's Castle

The *'castle of Easter Clyth ... commonly called Cruner Gunn's castle'*[348] note the word *'commonly.'* (The lands of Clyth were owned by the Scarlet family since the time of Robert the Bruce[349] which makes Gunn ownership of the castle unlikely.)

Descriptions of it are very similar from a range of sources, suggesting borrowed language and perhaps just one source, the first 1769 comment –

- A 1769 comment says *'on a rock in the edge of the sea in Easter Clyth, there is an old building, called Cruner Gunn's castle.'*[350]
- *'(On) a rock on the edge of the sea, in Easter Ayth, there is an old building called Cruner Gunn's Castle'*[351] is an 1802 description.
- An 1809 identification says *'on a rock in the edge of the sea in Easter Clyth, there is an old building, called Cruner Gunn's castle.'*[352]

But was it a castle[353] in any real way? The official 'Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments' description of it is *'The foundation of a rectangular keep 44ft by 28ft (1911) ... Halberry Castle is the turf-covered footings of a tower 19.0 by 6.0 by 0.6m high, defended on the landward side by a deep ditch spanned by a causeway. The ditch appears to have been mutilated by quarrying at its NW end. From a point 4.0m NW of the tower, there is a low turf-covered wall running N across the promontory forming a second line of defence, the gap between the wall and the tower being the entrance. Between the tower and the ditch are the vague footings of a rectangular building 8.0 by 4.5m. which is probably contemporary with the tower. Date not verified. (1967)*'[354]

[346] See http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/8944/details/gunn+s+castle+bulnacraig/ accessed 5 February 2013.
[347] Page 34, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[348] Page 236, *The Topographical, Statistical and Historical Gazeteer of Scotland* Volume First A-H.
[349] Page 9, Michael J. Gunn, *The Crowners of Caithness.*
[350] Page 354, A Thomas Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland, Volume 1.*
[351] Page 81, George Alexander Cooke (editor of the *Universal System of Geography*), *A General Description of Scotland to which is prefixed a Complete Travelling Guide*.
[352] Page 154, John Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most interesting Voyages and Travels in all Parts of the World, Vol. 3*.
[353] Page 313, Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica* records *'Castle Gunn, or the fortalice of the 'Great Gunn of Ulbster' the old Norse lord of the district, situated on an almost entirely insulated rock jutting out to sea.'* A fortalice is not a castle but a small fort, there was never a Gunn of Ulbster and there is not the slightest evidence to support any Gunn Norse origin so Sage's view lacks credence and reflects the Victorian myths of his time. Especially as he then goes on to discuss the Danish princess who supposedly drowned there – Norwegian records have no such knowledge of a lost princess to a Gunn of Ulbster.
[354] https://canmore.org.uk/site/8945/halberry-castle accessed 15 August 2019.

So the 1967 measurement has a 20 metre by 6 metre tower (not castle) with possibly an attached rectangular building. Big enough for an extended family in times of trouble and even, perhaps, with a shed to hold cattle or horses; the promontory on which the tower is on suggests one would not leave one's animals out to be taken by invaders. And why have such a small building there - it's certainly not a castle to dominate the sea. It's on the cliff edge to enable defence from land. In other words it's a defensive building, like many of the brochs of earlier years. A suggestion is that a farmer who rents from 100 to 150 acres requires a stable of 24 feet by 14 feet for six horses.[355] So Halberry has a possible stable suitable for someone running a farm of 100 to 150 acres; Halberry is not a castle, it's a defensive building for a farm.

The idea that Coroner Gunn ruled *'in medieval splendour in his castle at Halberry'*[356] as some believe but which is not in Gordon's history is impossible when one considers its size; the idea is only plausible when Coroner Gunn was living in a borrowed castle. As already said that borrowed castle was probably Sinclair Girnigoe castle due to his job. See chapter 8.3.

Other points against these Gunn castles

Neither castle was large enough to have been able to lock up criminals and store confiscated property which the Coroner had to do.

Neither castle appeared on the April 1642 map of Caithness[357] which featured, amongst much else, *'Ackergill'* and *'Girnigo or Castell Sincleer'* - this lack of appearance suggests, at the very least, the unimportance or non-existence of these buildings.

Books such as *Exploring Scotland's Heritage: The Highlands*[358] by Joanna Close-Brooks and published by The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland make no mention of any Gunn castles.

Given the Gunn castles / fortified farm houses do not feature in early histories of the county but appear as named buildings only many hundreds of years[359] after the Coroner's death, the use of the word 'Gunn' as part of the name of these ruins is highly questionable.

[355] Page 27, Captain John Henderson, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Caithness with Observations on the Means of its Improvement*.
[356] http://www.caithness.org/caithness/castles/gunn/historicfamiliesgunnhalberrycastles.htm accessed 6 February 2013.
[357] http://maps.nls.uk/view/00000277 National Library of Scotland (NLS), accessed 29 June 2017.
[358] HMSO, Edinburgh 1986. Nigel Tranter in Volume 5 of his *The Fortified House in Scotland; North and West Scotland*, also makes no mention of these Gunn 'castles / houses'. W. Mackay Mackenzie in *The Mediaeval Castle in Scotland also* has no mention of any Gunn castle. Nor are they are not mentioned in Foden's *Wick of the North* when he discusses the castles of the area. See his page 13.
[359] For example, in 'The Celtic Magazine Volume 6' Published in 1881. See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=E5QEAAAAQAAJ&q=gunns+castle&dq=gunns+castle&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjZw97osePUAhVjJMAKHbgeCR0Q6AEITTAI accessed 29 June 2017. There are other Scandinavian Princess Scottish fictional stories – Fitzroy Maclean provides a fine example in his *West Highland Tales*. Such stories might have evolved from the history of Margaret Maid of Norway who died aged seven but who was recognised as Queen of Scotland. She died in Orkney on her way to Scotland.

Overall
No sources give primary support for the name Gunn to be attached to any buildings, let alone castles. They castles are also not mentioned in the earliest history of the time.

Mark Rugg Gunn quotes the Rev. Alexander Gunn who suggested Snaekoll (see chapter 2.2) built Gunn's castle and possibly Halberry castle[360] which is impossible. As already discussed, there is no proof Snaekoll made it out of Norway and much to suggest he died there. If Snakeoll had been alive and had inherited the lands of his grandparents and had returned in say 1240 a real castle (not a farm house) would have been built as he would have been wealthy and he would have built it in the Orkney Islands. And he would have been in the historic records; the return of a person who killed an Earl and was forced in disgrace to Norway but somehow managed to get back to the Orkney Islands would not have been ignored, especially with the lands he would have owned.

A Gunn myth[361] is attached to one of the castles and Snaekoll; *'Gunn of Clyth (Snaekoll) while in Denmark gained the affection of a Danish Princess,'* and *'in returning home with the lady and attendants, the vessel was wrecked upon a rock and every soul perished. A pot full of gold was found on this rock ... the body of the princess was thrown on the shore and buried at Ulbster ... Gunn is said to have returned before her, having repented of his marriage, and only caring of her wealth. When she arrived at night on a ship at the coast, he had put a light signal at the worst place for landing, and all were drowned as he intended. He never secured the gold that was on board, and when the clan discovered his treachery they drove him from his castle.'*[362]

It's a ludicrous story. At often said, there is no proof that Snaekoll[363] returned to Scotland, let alone of him marrying twice. One would have thought Danish royal records would record marriage of a princess to a Scottish noble. Such records are not visible.

The Clan Gunn USA website[364] even gives credence to a variation of this myth as it says that *'Castle Gunn was destroyed by the King of Norway, whose daughter one of the Gunn chiefs* (the only option is Snaekoll) *had married, though he already had a wife at Castle Gunn. When the second wife sailed to Caithness to join her husband, the Gunn clan arranged for the beacon to be placed on a dangerous rock at Ulbster and so wrecked the ship and all aboard were drowned. The castle was destroyed in revenge and the Gunn chief and his retainers were slain.'* Now, it's an interesting variation with all the Clan being responsible this time (the whole story leaves Gunns in an awkward moral place); but the problems increase. It's too small to be a castle a princess would marry into, the Gunns were too minor, the Gunn who would have been in Norway would be carrying too much political baggage (Earl-slayer)

[360] Page 33 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[361] Recorded in chapter 16 'Tales and Legends' of ed. D. Ormand, The *New Caithness Book.* The chapter title says it all – it's not history. See, as well, chapter 2 of this text.
[362] Page 28-29, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[363] There is no logical reason for this person to be anyone other than Snaekoll or (his never existed son) Ottar. Actually, there is no proved Gunn before Coroner Gunn, but when has myth got anything to do with provable history?
[364] http://www.clangunn.us/gunn.htm accessed 6 February 2013. I note its mention that the Gunns *'appeared to possess virtually the whole of Caithness'* in the 12th and 13rh centuries; this, I am sure, would be a surprise to the Earls of Caithness, the Cheyne family (see page 36 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*; *'Reginald Cheyne had a third of the County'*), Johanna of Strathnaver's family and others with documented records of their ownership. Now the fact that Gunns lived throughout Caithness at this time is a different matter from 'possession'.

for a princess to marry and information about this attack – after all it involves the King of Norway - would be available from Norwegian and Scottish historical sources and it isn't.

Overall, the Gunn 'castles' are not castles; they are far too small and are, at best, fortified farmhouses. Their Gunn links are not proved. Coroner Gunn probably lived in a castle but it was one associated with his job, not one which his family owned. This job link, as well, explains why the Coroner's eldest son left the castle and went to Killernan. Castles stay in the family unless the castle was not owned by the family. The eldest son would not leave a family's castle – and Coroner Gunn's son did leave.

Osclay 2011

9. The Gunn family trees / genealogy

The following discussion includes numbers before the names of many Gunns. Numbers are in the formats (8,9) or (8) or (8.i). The first number indicates the generation that Gunn was from Coroner Gunn, with Coroner Gunn being Generation 1. If it is just a sole number such as (8) that generally means the person did not have any known issue. The second (Arabic) number shows seniority from Coroner Gunn as in (8,9). If the second number is a Latin number as in (8,i) this shows that line is not followed further, generally because the line is no longer 'Gunn.'

With (1.1) Coroner Gunn we have the start of Gunn history and the start of the complex, often confused, early Gunn genealogy. Such genealogy has caused controversy over many years so it is worth considering the qualities of the material which underpins this genealogy.

There are two areas to assess –

- What is known of the individuals who drew the trees / provided the information. This will impact on how trustworthy their information might be.

- Are there primary / factual sources which support aspects of the trees / information? Such sources not merely validate information but add to the possibility that more of the tree might be valid.

The key documents are -

9.1 Lord Lyon Sellar's Interlocutor 2011

The first, legally binding, document is Lord Lyon Sellar's Interlocutor of 20 September 2011 where he discussed various aspects of Clan Gunn genealogy, in particular the Interlocutor is important for what it said about (10,23) Margaret Gunn, daughter of (9,15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn and her husband (10,24) John Gunn and their descendants. See discussion on pages 152-157.

The complete document can be found on the internet but is not readily available.

9.2 The 1896 Gunn family tree of Captain Alexander Gunn

Captain Gunn, Braehour … is admitted to be, if not the greatest, at least a genuine, living authority on Gunn questions … It were strange if the captain had not been well posted up in all historic points, seeing that his father, Donald Gunn, Braehour, was the acknowledged sennachy or historian of his time … an unusually learned sennachy.

Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*, Pages 185-186

See https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53309167369/in/dateposted-public/ for the Tree.

The 1896 tree by (14,59) Captain Alexander Gunn was probably not known when Thomas Sinclair's *The Gunns* was written nor was it discussed when Mark Rugg Gunn's book was written. Certainly neither text mentions it. For some reason Captain Gunn's tree has been largely - totally? - ignored in Gunn genealogical discussion. It has some obvious errors (it's huge, so mistakes will happen) but that does not mean all of its information should be ignored, especially on that which relates to the Captain's family, especially as some key parts are backed up by Sutherland Estate papers and the National Records of Scotland.

It is important to note the positions held by (14,59) Captain Alexander Gunn and his father (13,48) Donald Gunn (Braehour) – they were the accepted historians / genealogists of their time. Given these positions, it is extremely unlikely that Captain Gunn would not accurately record his immediate family. And what Captain Gunn's tree shows of his close family is crucial to the Gunn story as Captain Gunn was a direct descendant of (10,23) Margaret who was the daughter of (9,15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn. Margaret was therefore also the aunt of (11) Chief William Gunn and his brother (11) Morrison. (10,23) Margaret was married to (10,24) John Gunn who was also descended from the Coroner.

From the 1896 tree – (10,23) Margaret is shown bottom right with her marriage to (10,24) John Gunn of Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, Grimachary. Her three nephews are shown. The Captain (11) William dwi (middle, right hand side – Thomas Sinclair page 149 calls him Alexander) is from Chief (10,19) Alexander Gunn of Badanloch's first marriage. Chief (11) William and (11) Morrison are from his second marriage. Chie' (10,19) Alexander Gunn is (10,23) Margaret's brother.

This part of the 1896 tree is practically 'living memory' genealogy – (10,23) Margaret Gunn was the Tree's author (Captain (14,59) Gunn) great-great-great-grandmother. It is worth noting that Captain Alexander Gunn's tree is accurate on the equivalent generations on his mother's side (the Gunn Kinbrace / Osclay line), in that the names he offers *exactly* match Sutherland Estate documents[365] so it seems reasonable to assume he is reasonably[366] accurate on his direct descent line. It is important to note that Captain Gunn had nothing to prove when he was writing the tree as descent through the female for the Gunn Chief line was not accepted in 1896.

There is further proof of the accuracy of the 1896 tree. The tree records (9,13) *'John eldest son of the Chief'*[367] - the Chief here being Chief (8,9) Alexander Gunn McHamish of Killearnan and Navidale.

[365] It is extremely difficult to get primary source proof for early Gunn genealogy, but Sutherland Estate primary source documents prove this tree was accurate for the stated generations. See chapter 10, generation 8, number 11.
[366] Nobody can be 100% accurate.
[367] His death details in the tree are not accurately recorded as shown by the NRS document on the following page.

This is important as the National Records of Scotland have material on (8,9) Alexander Gunn of Killearnan – and records (9,13) John being the Head of the Family in 1658 – and his sister (9,14) *'Kaitharin'* Gunn. It is proof that (9,13) John Gunn of Killernan existed and should be viewed as a Gunn Chief even though he has only rarely been so recorded in normal Clan Gunn books. So, the National Records of Scotland add support for the 1896 Tree.

Note there is no mention of any 'Chief of the Clan Gunn' in the following 1676 document when obviously in such a document it would have been mentioned, again suggesting that the position of 'Gunn Chief' was a 19th century invention. The National Records of Scotland (NRS) document GB234, GD84/1/27/7 says -

*Discharge and Renunciation by John Mackay [McKay] of Meleness [Melness] in favour of George, Lord Reay, narrating Marriage Contract, dated 1 and 8 May 1658, and Registered in the Sheriff Court Books of Sutherland 15 May 1676 between John, Lord Reay, as burden taker for Lieut. Col. Angus Mackay, his brother german, with consent of said Angus, on the one part, and John Gun [**Gunn**] of Killernan [**Killearnan**] as burden taker for Kaitharin Gun, his lawful sister, procreated betwixt the deceased Alexander Gun of Killernan and the deceased Dame Mary Mackay Lady Fowlis [Foulis], with consent of said Kaitharin, on the other part, whereby for causes therein specified said John, Lord Reay, obliged him and his heirs to infeft said Lieut. Col. Angus Mackay and Kaithrin Gun, then his future spouse, in conjunct fee and liferent in all and whole the wester nine penny and half penny land of Meleness in the barony of Kintail, and also said John, Lord Reay bound himself to make payment to the heirs male to be procreated betwixt the said Angus Mackay and Kaitharine Gun at the term of Whitsunday following their decease of the sum of 4000 merks and to infeft said heirs in so much of said lands for payment of annualrent of said sum, - to which Marriage Contract and sum of 4000 merks and sasine following thereon said John Mackay has right by Disposition and Assignation from said deceased Angus Mackay (therein designed of Meleness) and Kaitharin Gun, his spouse, father and mother of said John Mackay, dated 6 July 1697; and seeing the said George, Lord Reay, has made payment to said John Mackay of said sum of 4000 merks therefore said John Mackay as having right by said Disposition and Assignation and as eldest lawful son and heir procreated betwixt said Angus Mackay and Kaitharin Gun Discharges said George, Lord Reay, his heirs and others the representatives of said John, Lord Reay, of said sum of 4000 merks and annualrents thereof and of said Marriage Contract and Disposition and Assignation thereof and renounces said lands and delivers up the writs but in respect the said Disposition and Assignation also conveys the contract of wodset of the lands of Froskill and so cannot be given up said John Mackay binds himself to register the same and deliver an Extract thereof. Dated at Mellness 25 February and Registered P.R.S. Inverness 1 March 1726. Witnesses: Hugh Munro and Angus MackIntosh, servitors to said Lord Reay.*[368]

So we have

- Parents (8,9) Chief Alexander Gunn of Killernan (dead) and his wife Dame Mary Mackay Lady Fowlis (Foulis) who had children

[368] National Records of Scotland GD84/1/27/7, dated 25 February 1726 accessed 23 August 2017.

- Chief John Gunn (9,13) of Killearnan
- Katherine Gunn (9,14) his sister (future husband Lt. Col. Angus Mackay), and son John Mackay (10, no further number as not a Gunn).

Other National Records of Scotland exist for (8,9) Chief Alexander Gunn of Killearnan[369] which again show his importance, and again with no mention of him being a Gunn Chief. These show he was alive in 1644 and 'of' Killernan so Chief of the Clan Gunn, but dead by 1658. The dates conflict hugely with a document in Thomas Sinclair's *The Gunns* page 156 where (8,9) Alexander is meant to be alive in February 1668. The conflict is solved in chapter 10, generation 8, number 9; the answer is simply that various Chief Alexander Gunns have merged in Gunn mythology.

As well, as discussed in chapter 11 Sutherland Estate documents support other, older parts of this tree so it is legitimate to assume that the most recent generations of the tree are accurate given the reputation of Captain Alexander and his father in this area.

Overall, the 1896 Tree is clear and written by someone who was accepted as knowledgeable in the area (as was his father), dedicated to Gunn history and genealogy, who was there at the time and who was not trying to prove anything for a personal reason. These are very strong reasons why the tree should be accepted as accurate for at least the four generations earlier than the person who wrote the tree – namely (14,59) Captain Alexander Gunn.

9.3 Other early Gunn family trees / genealogical sources

Captain Gunn's Archive

The (14,59) Captain Gunn archive is held at 'Nucleus; The Nuclear and Caithness Archives' in Wick. There are several useful historic documents in it and the most important for genealogical purposes is the Rev. Sage 'Clan Gunn' booklet of 1801. It has the normal problems of confusing mythology with history when talking of early Gunn history but is very important on genealogy in his time, or in the memory of those with whom he talked. The Rev. Sage was of the time – and was not a Gunn, so his work is impartial.

1822 Tree and letter by William Gunn of Reay

This is a fascinating 'Clan Gunn' Tree with accompanying letter. It adds useful detail to the end of George Gunn of Corrish line, the non-link of the USA Bloomingdale Gunns to the traditional 'Clan Gunn Chief' line and incidental support to other lines. It seems not to have been in the public arena before. The source is from (14,59) Captain Alexander Gunn's descendants. The date of 1822 is obtained by a reference in the letter which accompanied this Tree referring to the death of Chief William Gunn 'upwards of 40 years ago. Chief William died in 1780.' The material is of interest as the Reverend Sage, a well-known later Gunn historian, passed over the chance to respond to the USA letter

[369] GD84/1/20/2B which shows Alexander alive 12 January 1644 and GD84/1/20/1B for the same time, accessed 28 August 2017, 31 December 2023.

– obviously William Gunn of Reay was thought of as a better authority. See https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53308802481/in/dateposted-public/ and https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53307937552/in/dateposted-public/

1868 / 1870 trees of Aeneas Gunn

A further Gunn family tree - by Aeneas Gunn of Edinburgh - is discussed in Thomas Sinclair's 'Appendix' to his Gunn history text. I have two versions of this tree – namely an 1868 and an 1870 version. The originals are in South Australia; mine are the only known copies of the documents. These have not been used in Gunn discussions since the Sinclair book.

Aeneas Gunn[370] is linked to (14.59) Captain Alexander Gunn, probably through the Gunn Kinbrace / Osclay line. Note that, like Captain Gunn, Aeneas Gunn had nothing to prove when writing his trees as the importance of the females in the Gunn Chief line was not then accepted.

These 1868 / 1870 trees have material about the Gunns of Watten who do not readily merge into the Chief line; this Watten material provides support for the idea these trees used the Rev. Alex Gunn of Watten's material. This is supported by a comment in Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* page 147 where Aeneas Gunn acknowledged being 'indebted' to the genealogy of the clan by the Rev Alex. Sage, lent by the Rev. Alex Gunn, Watten.

See https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53307933722/in/dateposted-public/ and https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53309054028/in/dateposted-public/

Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*

Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* provides much useful, but poorly organised, information. There is also much which is factually wrong as he merges genealogy with myth with tall stories with history and treats it all as being of equal merit. *The Gunns* is to be celebrated, though, for providing a base for information which would have been lost. The *Supplements* to this text are also often worthwhile – but are also often inaccurate.

Mark Rugg Gunn *Clan Gunn*

Mark Rugg Gunn's history is often confusing and contradictory; I am not aware of much (any?) new information in the book. The lack of footnotes to support his claims makes much of what he wrote questionable. He also blended history with mythology.

The 1919 New Hebrides Tree

This can be found at https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53307931912/in/dateposted-public/. It is mainly of use Badbea and Watten Gunns.

[370] Mrs Aeneas Gunn who wrote the Australian classic 'autobiographical novel' *We of the Never Never* married into Aeneas Gunn's extended family. Her husband, Aeneas Gunn – not the Aeneas of the 1868 and 1870 tree author but related to him - wrote articles and his '*Under A Regent Moon,* being a 2002 republishing of his 1891-1892 articles describing working in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia, was received with acclaim.

Other

The Sutherland Estate documents in the National Library of Scotland are of real importance; these documents provide facts. Facts are in short supply for Gunn history. See, in particular, https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53309157574/in/dateposted-public/. The National Records of Scotland have some further useful factual material.

Bits and pieces of genealogical information can be found elsewhere. The Gunn information in *Burke's Peerage* contains information which many find questionable.

Many books – see the bibliography - have merit. The key text is *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland from its Origin to the Year 1630* by Sir Robert Gordon, in various editions. This is a very useful book as it is so early; he writes of what he knows. And he does not need to mythologise Gunn history as the Gunns are not important. So, what he writes of the Gunns may be true or it might be a bit exaggerated if they impact on his Gordon family history. But Gunn stories which do *not* appear in his book but which appear hundreds of years later from no known source should be taken as fiction.

Towards Dunbeath Castle 2011.

The ruined Tormsdale village, near Westerdale, 2011.

10. Clan Gunn Chiefs / MacHamish Gunns: summary

The first and last sections of this chapter are probably of most interest to the general reader. Gunn Chiefs? As already said, there were no Clan Gunn Chiefs until they were created in 1803, after which 'Chief' was applied backwards going to Coroner Gunn (the first Gunn known). This 1803 date also meant that the Clan Gunn then existed and the term was then also applied backwards.

MacHamish was not a title held by one person; for discussion of the absurdity of Gunn MacHamish being a singular title see chapter 10.1. The word MacHamish merely indicates a person was from the Killernan Gunns, the senior Clan Gunn Chief line. Given MacHamish is a family indicator then every thirty years or so a new MacHamish generation is required.

The typical descendant line from Coroner Gunn is 'male centric' as it is the surname Gunn which matters. Times have changed; females are important when the Gunn surname is maintained. The idea that the traditional Clan Gunn Chief / MacHamish line died out is wrong. See the introduction and Appendices 1 and 2.

10.1 On the use of the word MacHamish, 'son of James'

The anglicised word MacHamish simply means descended from James, the accepted eldest son of Coroner Gunn. There have been many different Gunns in the Scottish Highlands over time so the need to clarify which family of Gunns was meant was obviously of importance[371] especially in historic documents.

Mythic Gunn history, however, has made MacHamish a word which equates with 'Chief[372] of the Clan Gunn.' MacHamish does not equate with that. If MacHamish meant 'Chief of the Clan Gunn' then 'Chief of the Clan Gunn' is how the MacHamishes would have been known in documents as Chief of a Clan was far more important than being named after the anonymous James. In other words, there is no reason for the term MacHamish to exist if MacHamish had meant 'Chief of the Clan Gunn,' as 'Chief of the Clan Gunn' would have meant the word MacHamish was irrelevant.

R. A. Dodgshon writes how *'patronymics* (such as Machamish) *would serve to orientate a person within a local community and establish his rights of access to share in its resources … individuals traced their descent from the person who first established their family occupation of a holding. In some*

[371] To rely on a general place to identify a Gunn family line (such as Gunn of Wick) was inadequate as many different families of Gunns could live in one named area. Gunn of Braemore – or Killearnan – was more specific as it applied to an Estate.

[372] As well, Coroner Gunn is known as Coroner, not Chief. Sir Robert Gordon's history page 92 does say of a MacHamish that he was *'cheeff of the Clan-Gun in Southerland'* and page 92 *'Chieftaine of the Clangun'* and similar comments. These views are picked up in Mark Rugg Gunn's *Clan Gunn* page 62, Thomas Smibert page 172 and elsewhere. The MacHamish point still stands namely that MacHamish would not exist as a term if this line was the Clan Gunn Chief line; and given there had never been Clan Gunn Chiefs before so why (and how) would William become one? All Gordon (and Smibert) was doing was using 'Chief' as shorthand for 'the most important Gunn family in an area' because for most Scottish families 'important' and 'Clan Chief' were the same thing. Gordon reduced the unique Gunn history to a stereotype.

cases, it could produce awareness of a descent chain … In effect, they constituted loosely coupled descent groups that drew their primary meaning from the land which they occupied."[373]
In other words, for Dodgshon a patronymic such as MacHamish was not a title but an indicator of the land of a family. In fact, Dodgshon's observation explains why the anonymous James is remembered – he first held the land – which adds a central reason as to why the term MacHamish existed.

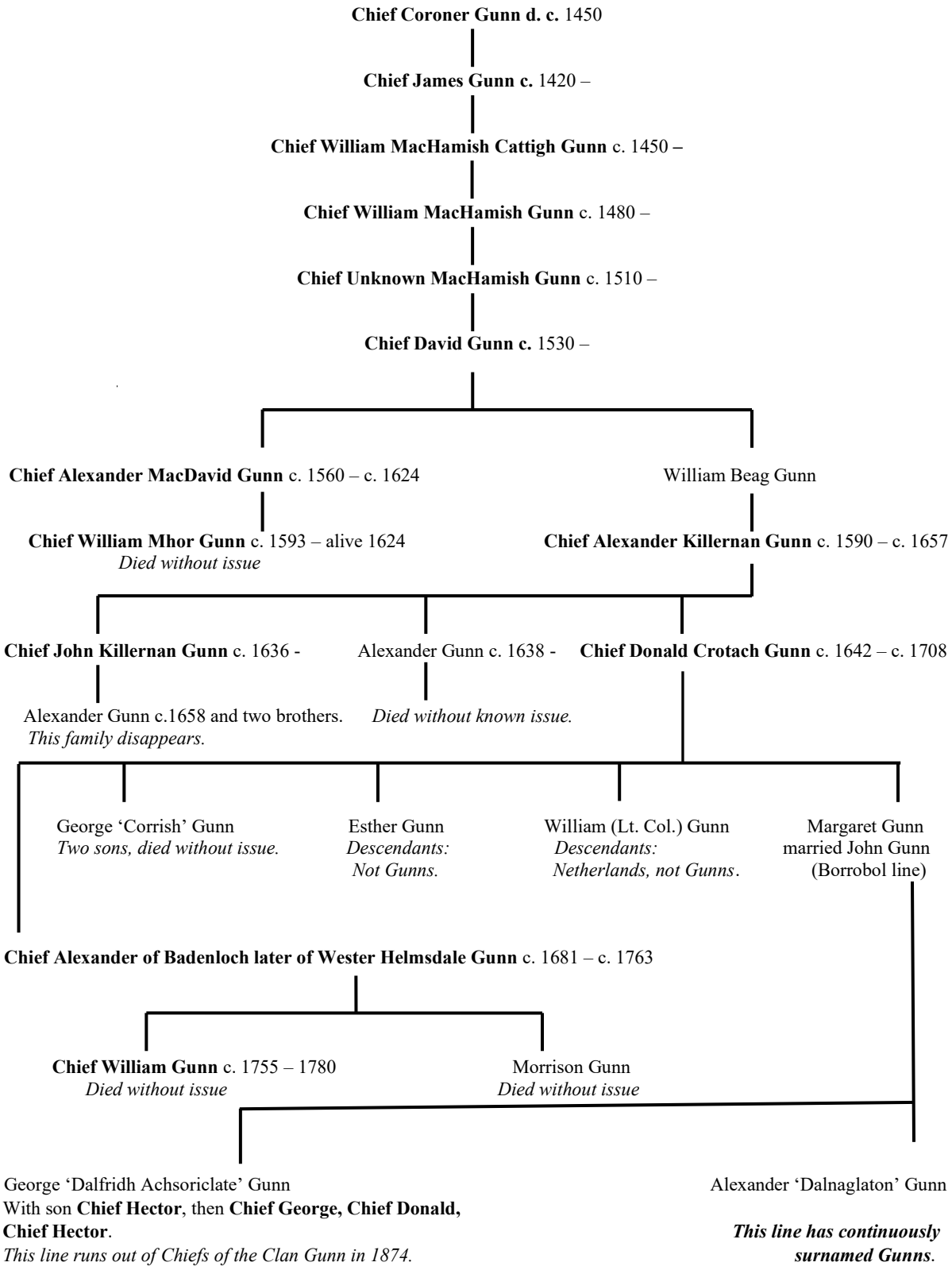
The word MacHamish certainly applied to more than one individual at a time; consider how one branch of the descendants of Robert, the generally accepted second son of Coroner Gunn, are known as MacRobs. Another branch from Robert, the Braemore Gunns, is known by the name of their estate. The similarity between MacHamish and MacRob is obvious; the application of each word should be the same – it should apply to all descendants. MacHamish of Killernan[374] is nothing more than the equivalent of MacRob and Braemore blended together for all Killernan based (or originated from) descendants of the Coroner's first son.[375] And there is another important branch of the Gunns called MacHeorish[376] (MacSheorais); again, a term applied to the whole of that branch. These are descendants of George Gunn of Borrobol, see page 170.[377] It also makes sense when one looks at comparative Scottish Highland surnames; place names / Estates are regularly attached to subsections of a family.[378]

There is also historic proof that more than one MacHamish was alive at one time and that the term was therefore not restricted to the most senior member of that family; see the life of William Mhor (generation 8) for an example. This wider use of the term MacHamish also makes sense as the nuclear family had not been invented – extended generations of one family lived together. And the estate of Killernan was large[379] and so could look after many MacHamishes at the one time, although the exact detail of the estate in the 1500s is not known.

In summary, the word MacHamish was applied to a specific Gunn family line, and the term applied to all (or just male?) descendants; the idea that 'MacHamish' was a singular honour for one individual at one time is just wrong.

[373] Page 182 R. A. Dodgshon 'The nature of Scottish Clans' in ed. R. A. Houston and I. D. Whyte *The Nature of Scottish Society 1500-1800.*
[374] To have MacHamishes of Killernan also allows for Gunns who were not descendants of James to have lived and worked at Killernan.
[375] I note the estates held by the first and second son of the Coroner; one wonders how the Coroner was paid for his coronial duty at Caithness. Was all the property seized by him as part of his legal work fully accounted for at his death?
[376] See http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/files/Gunn,%20Michael%20James%20-%20Interlocutor%20and%20Note.pdf for its use applied to a complete line, accessed 11 July 2017. The Lord Lyon Sellar Michael J. Gunn 2011 Interlocutor can also be found elsewhere on the internet.
[377] See Thomas Sage's history at https://clangunn.weebly.com/sages-gunn-history-manuscript-6.html accessed 17 April 2021.
[378] The Mackays, for example, have at least Aberach Mackays, Scoury Mackays, Bighouse Mackays, Strathy Mackays, Melness Mackays and Sandwood Mackays.
[379] Wester Killernan and Easter Killernan ran to ten named tenants (four; six) in 1811/1812; it is possible that Killernan in the 1500s may have been both of these areas. That's ten families to run the land, more than enough for a few MacHamishes. Page 102, ed. R.J. Adam, *Sutherland Estate Management 1802-1816 Volume 1.*

10.2 The traditional Clan Gunn Chief line, a simplified chart


Chief Coroner Gunn d. c. 1450
Chief James Gunn c. 1420 –
Chief William MacHamish Cattigh Gunn c. 1450 **–**
Chief William MacHamish Gunn c. 1480 –
Chief Unknown MacHamish Gunn c. 1510 –
Chief David Gunn c. 1530 –
Chief Alexander MacDavid Gunn c. 1560 – c. 1624
William Beag Gunn
Chief William Mhor Gunn c. 1593 – alive 1624
Died without issue
Chief Alexander Killernan Gunn c. 1590 – c. 1657
Chief John Killernan Gunn c. 1636 -
Alexander Gunn c. 1638 -
Chief Donald Crotach Gunn c. 1642 – c. 1708
Alexander Gunn c.1658 and two brothers.
This family disappears.
Died without known issue.
George 'Corrish' Gunn
Two sons, died without issue.
Esther Gunn
Descendants:
Not Gunns.
William (Lt. Col.) Gunn
Descendants:
Netherlands, not Gunns.
Margaret Gunn
married John Gunn
(Borrobol line)
Chief Alexander of Badenloch later of Wester Helmsdale Gunn c. 1681 – c. 1763
Chief William Gunn c. 1755 – 1780
Died without issue
Morrison Gunn
Died without issue
George 'Dalfridh Achsoriclate' Gunn
With son **Chief Hector**, then **Chief George, Chief Donald, Chief Hector**.
This line runs out of Chiefs of the Clan Gunn in 1874.
Alexander 'Dalnaglaton' Gunn
This line has continuously surnamed Gunns.

10.3 Traditional Clan Gunn Chiefs; a summary

Bold *are the Chiefs. The numbers in front of a name reflect the generation from the Coroner. Generations 3-5 are problematic.*

A concise summary

1. Coroner GUNN (d. c. 1450)
2. James GUNN (c. 1420-)
3. William MacHamish Cattigh GUNN (c. 1450-)
4. William MacHamish GUNN (c. 1480-)
5. Unknown MacHamish GUNN (c. 1510-)
6. David GUNN (c. 1530-)
7. Alexander MacDavid GUNN (c. 1560-c. 1624) Sp(ouse). Barbara MACKAY (c. 1570 -). *With brother William Beag Gunn whose descendants became Chief.*
8. William Mhor GUNN (c. 1593-) *Died without issue.*

7 William Beag GUNN (c. 1561-).

8. Alexander Killernan GUNN (c. 1590-c. 1657). Sp. Mary Christiane (Dame) (Lady Fowlis) MACKAY (c. 1598-c. 1657).
9. John Killernan GUNN (c. 1636-). Sp. Katherine (Christina?) SINCLAIR (c. 1640-).
9. Donald Crotach GUNN (c. 1647-c. 1708). Sp. Margaret SUTHERLAND. *The seniority of his daughter Margaret is not clear but it is possible that she was older than her brother Chief Alexander.*
10. Margaret GUNN[380] Spouse John GUNN Kinbrace, Grimachary, Rumsdale (his father was George GUNN of Borrobol – as such, John was a MacHeorish Gunn). Elder son, George from whom came Chiefs 14-16. Second son Alexander from whom come ongoing traditional Chief line.
10. Alexander of Badanloch / Wester Helmsdale GUNN (c. 1683- c. 1763).

[380] It is clear that Alexander Gunn of Badenloch was the eldest son of Chief Donald Crotach but it is not clear that Alexander was the eldest child. Alexander's dates are given as 1683-1763 in the 1896 Tree. Chief Donald Crotach Gunn was born no later than about 1647 due to the age of his mother and he was dead no later than 1709 as shown by Sutherland Estate documents. So, Donald's eldest son Alexander was born when Donald was around 36. That's quite old to have a first child. Donald may have married late – or he may have had his daughters first.
Alexander's sister Esther is given as the eldest female in at least one source and she married out of the Gunn line to Donald Mackay of Skerray. His other sister Margaret could easily be older than Alexander. Margaret, as mentioned, married John Gunn, son of George Gunn of Borroble. This John Gunn is recorded as being a very good tenant on the Badanloch Estate when Donald Gunn took over at Badanloch. We do not know exactly when Donald took over but Alexander Gunn took over from his father by 1709. So, let us assume John Gunn was at Badanloch by 1700 at the latest – that gives John a birth year of around 1670. If Margaret was born around the time her father was in his mid twenties to early thirties which is a reasonable age to have children, in other words around the 1670s, she would have been about the same age as her husband. This is obviously not proof that Margaret was older than Chief Alexander but it is suggestive that she might have been.
Question - given Lord Lyon Blair's ruling that women could inherit the Clan Gunn Chief title should it be viewed that Margaret inherited the Chiefship when her father Chief Donald Crotach Gunn died? If so, it would mean removing Chief Alexander Gunn of Badanloch and Chief William Gunn from the Chief line and adding Margaret and her elder son George Gunn of Dalfridh / Achscoriclate to it. I have run with the traditional male-centric view for convenience. Margaret's line is certainly the ongoing Chief line after the death of Chief William Gunn in 1780.

11. William GUNN (c. 1755-1780). *There is no proof that his younger brother Morrison lived longer than his brother and much to suggest that he did not.*

*****

Following the death of 11. ***William GUNN*** *in 1780 the followin, from George Gunn Dalfridh / Achscoriclate the elder son of 10. Margaret Gunn daughter of 9.* Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, *became the Chiefs. These are technically the only four Clan Gunn Chiefs as the first two were legally established.*

12. Hector GUNN in Thurso d. 1803.
13. George GUNN in Rhives 1787-1859.
14. Donald GUNN in Truro d. 1863.
14. Hector GUNN in Elgin d. 20 August 1874.
14. Eizabeth Sutherland Gunn (she disappears from the records after 1861.)

*****

Following the death of Hector Gunn in 1874 the ongoing Clan Gunn Chief line continues from Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton, being the second son of 10. Margaret Gunn, daughter of 9. Chief Donald Crotach Gunn.

*****

Part 1; early Chiefs

*As said, the numbers in front of a name reflect the generation. Generations 3-5 are problematic but likely. Obviously, a new generation is needed every thirty years or so. The name in **bold** is the Chief or is the line from which later Chiefs came. Bold and italics mean they were possibly Chiefs – see their biographies.*

1. **Coroner GUNN** (d. c. 1450)
   2. **James GUNN** (c. 1420-)
      3. **William MacHamish Cattigh GUNN** (c. 1450-)
         4. **William MacHamish GUNN** (c. 1480-)
            5. **Unknown MacHamish GUNN** (c. 1510-)
               6. **David GUNN** (c. 1530-)
                  7. **Alexander MacDavid GUNN** (c. 1560-c. 1624) Sp(ouse). Barbara MACKAY (c. 1570 -). *With brother 7. William Beag Gunn whose descendants become the Chief line. See Part 2*
                     8. **William Mhor GUNN** (c. 1593-) *Died without issue.*

*****

Part 2; to Chief Donald Crotach GUNN and his children

7. *William Beag GUNN* (c. 1561-). *See above.*
   8. **Alexander Killernan GUNN** (c. 1590-c. 1657). Sp. Mary Christiane (Dame) (Lady Fowlis) MACKAY (c. 1598-c. 1657).
      9. **John Killernan GUNN** (c. 1636-). Sp. Katherine (Christina?) SINCLAIR (c. 1640-).
         10. Alexander GUNN (c. 1658-). *He had two younger brothers. It is possible that Alexander was the Chief at one point.*
      9. Alexander GUNN (c. 1638-). *Was he ever Chief? Possibly. Married well but with no known children.* Sp. Christina MACKAY.
      9. **Donald Crotach GUNN** (c. 1642-c. 1708). Sp. Margaret SUTHERLAND. *It is probable that Donald was a Chief. The seniority of his daughters Esther and Margaret is not clear but it is plausible that they were both older than Chief Alexander as is discussed in the below footnote.*
         10. Esther GUNN. *Married a non-Gunn, Donald Mackay of Skerray. Descendants.*
         10. ***Margaret GUNN***.[381] Spouse John GUNN Kinbrace Farm, Grimachary, Rumsdale (his father was George Gunn of Borrobol – as such, John was a MacHeorish Gunn).

[381] It is clear that Alexander Gunn of Badanloch was the eldest son of Chief Donald Crotach, it is not clear that Alexander was the eldest child. Alexander's dates are given as 1683-1763 in the 1896 Clan Gunn Tree. Chief Donald Crotach Gunn was born no later than about 1647 due to the age of his mother and he was dead no later than 1709 as shown by Sutherland Estate documents. So, Donald's eldest son Alexander was born when Donald was around 36. That's quite old to have a first child. Donald may have married late – or he may have had his daughters first. Obviously male tradition has Alexander as the Chief, but was that accurate given Lord Lyon Blair's judgment, see later in this footnote.
Alexander's sister Esther is given as the eldest female in at least one source and she married out of the Gunn line to Donald Mackay of Skerray and had her first child by 1725-1730. His other sister Margaret could be older than Alexander. Margaret, as mentioned, married John Gunn, son of George Gunn of Borroble. This John Gunn is recorded as being a very good tenant on the Badanloch Estate when Donald Gunn took over at Badanloch. We do not know exactly when Donald took over but Alexander Gunn took over from his father by

10. Alexander of Badanloch later of Wester Helmsdale GUNN (c. 1683- c. 1763).
11. William GUNN (c. 1755-1780).
11. Morrison GUNN (c. 1760-). *There is no proof that he outlived his brother.*
10. George Corrish GUNN (c.1684-). *This line quickly became extinct.*
10. William (Lt. Col.) GUNN (c. 1686-). *Dutch descendants, not eligible to be Chief.*

*****

Part 3; Margaret Gunn's, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, elder son line

*Following the death of **Chief William GUNN** in India in 1780 the Chiefship line went to Margaret Gunn's elder son's descendants and may have done so earlier.*

10. ***Margaret GUNN*** Spouse John GUNN Kinbrace Farm, Grimachary, Rumsdale.
11. *George GUNN* Dalfridh / Achscoriclate. Elder son.
12. **Hector GUNN** in Thurso d. 1803.
13. **George GUNN** in Rhives 1787-1859.
14. **Donald GUNN** in Truro d. 1863.
14. **Hector GUNN** in Elgin d. 1874.

(It is accepted that the male Gunn line here is extinct.)

14. Elizabeth Sutherland GUNN, perhaps a Chief. She disappears from the records after the 1861 census.

*With the death of **Chief Hector GUNN** in Elgin the Chief of the Clan Gunn title went to the descendants of the second son of Margaret Gunn. He was 11. Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton.*

*****

1709. So, let us assume John Gunn was at Badanloch by 1700 at the latest – that gives John a birth year of around 1670. If Margaret was born around the time her father was in his mid twenties to early thirties, in other words around the 1670s, she would have been about the same age as her husband. This is obviously not proof that Margaret was older than Chief Alexander but it is suggestive that she might have been.

Question - given Lord Lyon Blair's ruling that women could inherit the Clan Gunn Chief title did Margaret actually inherit the Chiefship when her father Chief Donald Crotach Gunn died? If so, it would mean removing Chief Alexander Gunn of Badanloch and Chief William Gunn from the Chief line and adding Margaret and her older son George Gunn of Dalfridh / Achscoriclate to it. Given this, I have placed them in bold and italics in the discussion. I have, though, run with the traditional male-centric view for convenience. Margaret's line is certainly the ongoing Chief line after the death of Chief William Gunn in 1780 whichever way you view this issue.

Part 4; Margaret Gunn's, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, younger son line

*The key year is 1874 when Chief **Hector GUNN** in Elgin died and the Chiefship line went to Margaret Gunn's younger son's descendants namely from Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton. This is the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line.*

10. ***Margaret GUNN*** Spouse John GUNN Kinbrace Farm, Grimachary, Rumsdale.
11. Alexander GUNN of Dalnaglaton d. 1765 married Janet / Jean Mcleod (Macleod) of Dalnaha. Younger son.
12. John GUNN in Dalnaglaton, later Braehour, 1721-1810 married Mary Dunbar (Rowens / Hempriggs). *Eldest son. Many descendants.*

****

There is no easy way to show a simplified version of descent from John Gunn in Dalnaglaton then Braehour, due to the volume of people involved.

To explain. John had eight children. These children had around 41 children. In other words, John Gunn was grandfather to about 41 grandchildren. And those grandchildren were born in the 1770s – 1800s so one can imagine the increasing complexity over time. Many of these descendants have died out or are no longer Gunns.

The more historically interesting of the children of John include William Gunn of Braehour who had fourteen children. One of those fourteen children was the Hon. Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada who had twelve children. Another son was William Gunn of Waranga Basin in Victoria, Australia who had six children.

Another son of John Gunn was Donald Gunn of Braehour and Brawlbin who had nine children. These may be extreme cases but they show the problem – there are many descent lines to follow.

I explore some of the more interesting Braehour Gunns in pages 188-270.

11. Lives from Coroner Gunn

As said many times before, each Gunn in this section has either one or two numbers attached to their name. These are in the form – 8 or 13.48.

If there is one number, such as 10, that indicates the generation of the person from Coroner Gunn (who is generation 1), it also normally indicates there are no known descendants.

For those with two numbers the second shows seniority. An example - Coroner Gunn has the number 1.1. which means he was generation 1 and seniority number 1 as he is the first Gunn known to history. Superscript numbers are sometimes attached to a name as a further indication of the generation of a person.

The exception is generation 14. I have not attached a second number to that generation as there are too many to be sure of the second number's accuracy but it may also still indicate no known descendants. Numbers are not attached to those after generation 14.

Numbers in the form i, ii, iii are for these people not further explored as mainly they are no longer Gunn in surname or they are too far away from the central, traditional Chief of the Clan Gunn line to be of interest. (I am, as already stated, using Chief of the Clan Gunn in its modern sense. As previously said before 1803 there was no Chief of the Clan Gunn as Gunns are not a traditional Clan.) From 1803 there was a legal Chief of the Clan Gunn and, by implication a Clan Gunn.

Generations 3 - 6 are, for convenience, assumed to directly descend from one generation to the next but that might not be accurate; an uncle or brother might have taken over the Killernan estate. Evidence of descent is lacking for these generations. A few of the early people here are questionable; I make this clear in the discussion.

The listing is in seniority of birth years but these are sometimes awkward to find and sometimes contradictory. As well, females will often have been listed last in earlier texts and documents for historic sexist reasons. The seniority is the best I can manage.

This section is divided into Parts to make the story more narratively sensible.

PART ONE A – Lives from Chief Coroner Gunn (1,1) to Chief William Mhor (8)

SUMMARY of the main Gunns in Part One A:

1.1 Chief Coroner Gunn *died c(irca). 1450*
2.2 Chief James Gunn *born c. 1420*
3.3 Chief William (MacHamish) Cattaig Gunn *born c. 1450*
4.4 Chief William Gunn *born c. 1480 -*
5.5 Chief Unknown Gunn *born c. 1510 –*
6.6 Chief David Gunn *born c. 1530 –*
7.7 Chief Alexander MacDavid Gunn *c.1560 – c.1624, with brother*
7.8 William Beag Gunn born c. 1561. See Part One B.
8. Chief William Mhor Gunn *born c. 1593. Died without issue (hereafter dwi).*

Generation 1

1.1 CHIEF CORONER GUNN

For the Coroner's full life see chapter 8. Coroner Gunn is the first Gunn known to history. He died no later than 1452**.** He had the following child: (2,2) JAMES Gunn born 1420s.

Generation 2

2.2 CHIEF JAMES GUNN (Coroner[1]).

James, eldest son of Coroner Gunn born in the 1420s
We know little of James[382]

So what is known of James? Sometime – no later than 1452 - Coroner Gunn died at a battle in or near St Tayres and James was not at the battle, given Sir Robert Gordon's account which stated that all Gunns there died.[383] If James was the eldest by birth[384] it is possible he was not at the battle of St Tayres as he lived on his own estate. James might, of course, have still lived at the castle which went with his father's position, but was not at the battle for other reasons such as being ill on the day.

A birth date for James of around the mid-1420s gives an age of thirty or so at the time of his father's death in the early 1450s and such an age is also a reasonable time to have moved to one's own home.

[382] Page 62, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[383] Page 92, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[384] There is no firm knowledge of the Coroner's children's birth order; it has to be surmised for those Gunns who lived after the Coroner's death by the estates they held and their place in history. This means James was the eldest surviving son and Robert the next. Page 320 John Henderson W.S. *Notes on Caithness Family History* 1884 has James as a possible fifth son but the evidence for that is not given.

After his father's death[385] – or possibly before - James settled at the rural estate of Killernan[386] in the Parish of Kildonan.[387] Mark Rugg Gunn accepts James *'may have had a residence there* (Sutherland) *beforehand* (the battle of St Tayre's) ... (but certainly after the battle he had) *land at Killernan from Adam Gordon, then Earl of Sutherland*'[388] so James Gunn was a tenant of the Sutherland family, like many other people.

The vast majority of the Sutherland Estate papers[389] still in existence are from the 1600s onwards. The paperwork of the earlier times seems not to have survived so we have no idea when the wadset (a sort of rental document) for Killernan and possible associated lands was granted, nor for how long, nor how much James had to pay. (Wadsets are known as early as August 1419[390] so it is probable that they applied to the Gunns.) It is important to note that the lands were held on a legal base, probably stronger as the years rolled on and the rule of law developed. Was the wadset of Killernan paid for by money from the Coroner's estate?

James T. Calder writes that after St Tayres *'James Gunn ... with his two brothers William and Henry, and a number of followers, removed to Sutherlandshire. The dwelling house ... was at Killernan, in the parish of Kildonan'*.[391] So James may have provided a home / employment / security for two younger brothers and some other random Gunns, ex servants from the castle perhaps?[392] This all seems quite reasonable, although evidence for Calder's comment is not known. Note that it is possible more than one son of the Coroner lived and worked at Killernan for at least some period of time; this supports the idea that more than one MacHamish could live and work at Killernan in the following generations.

Some believe the Gunns owned the castle the Coroner lived in. They are wrong. Why would James leave[393] his family's castle and go to Killernan after – or around - the death of his father? James, as eldest son, would own the castle sometime (and local Gunn land if there had been such a thing) if it had been his father's possession. Younger sons perhaps might leave a castle, not the eldest son. The law of the land would also have been on James' side – according to Gunn mythic history the Keiths killed the senior officer of the law (the Coroner) in Caithness. This did not mean James would have had to move. He would certainly have kept his castle. Scotland – even the Highlands - in the 1450s was a much more civilised place than is suggested by various Gunn myths.

The fact James did not stay at the castle shows it was not owned by the Gunns – it was, as discussed in chapter 8 merely occupied by Coroner Gunn as part of his job as one of the King's important servants

[385] Page 92, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.* says it is after the Coroner's death.
[386] Page 142, Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*.
[387] Page 110 Thomas Sinclair being but one reference; no place is given in the 1896 tree however.
[388] Page 62. Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*. Technically it would have been from Elizabeth de Moravia the 10th Countess of Sutherland who married Adam Gordon, younger son of the second Earl of Huntly. The lands of the Province of Strathnaver were also not owned by Gunns; see M. Bangor-Jones 'From Clanship to Crofting; Landownership, Economy and the Church in the Province of Strathnaver' in ed. R. J. Baldwin *The Province of Strathnaver.*
[389] http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/online/cnmi/inventories/dep313.pdf accessed 14 February 2013.
[390] Page 331, Walter Ross, *Lectures on the History and Practice of the Law of Scotland Volume 2*.
[391] Page 87, James T. Calder, *Sketch of the Civil and Traditional History Of Caithness, from the tenth century etc.*
[392] What is meant by 'followers' is unclear. Servants from the castle who were no longer employed? Farmhands? Assorted obscure relatives? The source for James Calder is not known.
[393] There is no record – nor mythic report – that the 'Gunn' castle was requisitioned, nor that it was destroyed and such events would have been mentioned in Sir Robert Gordon's history. And such destruction or requisition say by the Crown would be the only reason for someone to not live at their own castle.

in Caithness. With the Coroner's death the castle was no longer able to be lived in by Gunns as it reverted back to the King. The lack of residential permanency is why James moved from the castle either after or before his father's death. It also explains why members of his family went with him and why, perhaps, some Gunn servants and / or farm hands moved with him to Killernan.

The 1896 Gunn family tree gives a date of 1487[394] against James' name; 1487 might be when he died. The 1896 tree also records him as Cattach, which is more commonly attached to his son William. 'Cattigh / Cattaig / Cattach' is generally viewed as an indicator that they lived in Sutherland.[395] If James did die in 1487 that gives him a lifespan of about sixty years; that's not impossible but 1487 remains just a possibility.

James is an unremarkable character; his invisibility is further proof that MacHamish is not a remarkable title but merely a word of convenience to indicate a member of the family who lived at Killernan. To have a name become a title in following generations one needs to have done famous things but James is just anonymous.

James Gunn had the following child: (3.3) WILLIAM MACHAMISH CATTIGH GUNN born in the 1450s.

Generation 3

3.3 CHIEF WILLIAM MACHAMISH CATTIGH GUNN

(James2, Coroner1) was born in the 1450s. William (3,3) was the son of James (2,2) and grandson of Coroner Gunn (1,1). Scottish naming tradition often has the first son named after the paternal grandfather so was William the first name of Coroner Gunn?

As said, Cattigh is generally accepted as meaning a resident of Sutherland. Why did William (3,3) gain the statement of the obvious – he had the wadset of Killernan so obviously lived in Sutherland? Donald Gunn (8,11) who is often called 'the Scholar' has a title which seems ironically applied; his August 1638 wadset acquisition of the Kinbrace Estate is signed by him and annotated *'in my hand'* suggesting that he was barely able to do that but was proud that he could. Was William Cattigh's (3,3) title equally ironic? In other words, did William (3,3) make too much of living in Sutherland in conversation with others?

There was a William MacHamish at the 1517 battle of Torran Dubh (near Rogart) but William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3) was too old for that battle. William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3) would have

[394] *Burke's Peerage* has him dying in 1496, killed in action, no idea why.
[395] Page 2, Sir Robert Gordon *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.* points out that the inhabitants of Sutherland were called in *'old Scottish or Irish language'* Cattigh. Page 92 also has William as born and bred in Sutherland. There is a suggestion (Page 37 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*) that it might also mean he was of Caithness origin, which covers both options!

been in his mid-sixties. That's old – and life expectancy of the time was against him.[396] Far more probable is that William (3,3) had a son William (4,4) who fought at Torran Dubh. Both would be MacHamishes. Alternatively, was William MacHamish of Torran Dubh from another branch of the MacHamish family (see chapter 10.1) who also lived at Killernan? Perhaps. Once all members of the family are MacHamishes the ability to say who was definitely where becomes tricky. The battle of Torran Dubh is discussed in the next life, namely William MacHamish (4,4).

William MacHamish Cattigh's (3,3) son, according to myth, was an Alexander[397] and this Alexander supposedly married Barbara Mackay; she was certainly born around 1570. But William (3,3) was born around 1450 and the Alexander who married Barbara Mackay had to be born say no more than around ten years before his wife so the Alexander who married Barbara Mackay had to be born around 1560 which makes him born a bit over one hundred years after his supposed father. The myth does not work. The Alexander MacDavid Gunn (7,7) who actually married Barbara Mackay was actually the great great grandson of William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3).

Around William MacHamish Cattigh's (3,3) time a Law Court was established at Wick in 1503[398]; the Highlands were not as free from law as many Gunn myths demand although the area could be still highly unruly. The Church Sessions also provided 'justice' over the centuries.

William MacHamish Cattigh Gunn had the following child: (4.4) WILLIAM MACHAMISH GUNN born 1480s.

Overall, William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3) has many stories attached to him but they fail under examination.

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From William MacHamish (3,3) to William MacHamish (4,4) to Unknown MacHamish (5,5) to David Gunn (6,6) I have presented the line as direct descent from one generation to the next; there is no proof for that idea. It could easily be the most able of the MacHamish family who took over Killernan – many possibilities exist including a younger son, a nephew or a brother when one generation became incapacitated. As well, as shown later with William Mhor (8) and William Beag's (7,8) sons, direct MacHamish descent lines die out or disappear and so the next most senior line could become in charge.

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[396] *'The mean life expectancy of kings of Scotland and England, reigning from 1000 AD to 1600 AD were 51 and 48 years, respectively. Their monks did not fare as well. In the Carmelite Abbey, only five per cent survived past 45. … wealthier people would have a life expectancy of more than forty years.'* http://www.sarahwoodbury.com/life-expectancy-in-the-middle-ages/ accessed 29 May 2018. This detail shows it would have been extremely unlikely that this William Gunn (3,3) would have been alive in 1517, let alone fighting at Torran Dubh. He also would not have killed the Chief of the Clan Keith which Gunn mythology has him doing – see chapter 8.3 and the next life. See also page 166 Mark Rugg Gunn *The Gunns*.
[397] Page 166, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*.
[398] Page 374, Donald A. Young, *The Book of Lybster*.

Generation 4

4.4 CHIEF WILLIAM MACHAMISH GUNN (William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born in the 1480s.

There is record[399] for a 'William Jameson or William Mackames-Wick-Cruner' living at Killernan *'early in the sixteenth century'* and more specifically in 1525. It is possible that this MacHamish was the William[400] who fought at Torran Dubh in 1517. Given the life span of the time it is highly unlikely that William Cattigh (3,3) lived long enough to be the William MacHamish who fought at Torran Dubh and was then still alive eight years later, so two William MacHamishes are far more likely. Time could easily merge successive Williams given the vast majority of Scottish Highland history of this time was oral. This William MacHamish (4,4) was perhaps born around 1480 to be old enough to have fought at Torran Dubh and be a witness to a document in 1525.

A William MacHamish at Torran Dubh 1517

The traditional view[401] is that the Torran Dubh battle happened because the new Countess of Sutherland (Elizabeth Sutherland) married Adam Gordon in that year. Adam was the second son of George Gordon Earl of Huntly, who was also Chief of the Clan Sutherland. John Mackay, who was Chief of the Clan Mackay of Strathnaver, did not like that the Gordon children from that marriage would therefore become Earls of Sutherland. So John Mackay invaded Sutherland *'burning and spoiling all before him'*.[402] Mark Rugg Gunn says William *'led the Clan at Torran Dubh'*[403] but this view is not supported by Sir Robert Gordon, the earliest historic source by hundreds of years, as he did not mention any Gunns at the Torran Dubh battle other than William who was one of the two subordinate leaders of the *'the inhabitants of the* (Sutherland*) county'*[404] who fought in the battle.[405] Yes, another Clan Gunn battle has no historic support[406] and Sir Robert Gordon had no reason to ignore the Clan Gunn if they had been there.

It makes sense for a William to be involved in this battle. Firstly, Chief John Mackay is *'burning and spoiling all before him'* – the property of Killearnan would have been known so to help defeat Mackay before Killernan was destroyed makes sense. And secondly, defending the Countess of Sutherland

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[399] *Origines Parochiales Scotiae Part 1*. Page 740. records *'Early in the sixteenth century ... William Jameson or William Mackames-Wick-Cruner ... had part or whole of the lands of Killernan… witness to a seisin of Pronse in 1525 ...'* See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=737lAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA779&dq=Earl+of+Caithness+1556&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjKlcrNnpvXAhXMJsAKHQ9oAB8Q6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Earl%20of%20Caithness%201556&f=false accessed 31 October 2017. Note there is no mention of him being a 'Gunn Chief'.

[400] Page 91, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* has *'William Mackames_Wick-Chruner'*.

[401] Based on https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Torran_Dubh accessed 2 October 2017.

[402] Page 91, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*

[403] Page 168, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

[404] Page 91, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland*.

[405] Also known as Torran-dow and Torran-Du.

[406] The Rev. Gunn of Watten in 1804 quoted an anonymous poem saying Gunns arrived at the fight; but this is a song / poem given three hundred years after the event. It is not history. See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=B9MRAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA76&dq=john+mackay+strathnaver+1517&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjHk9utndzWAhUMJMAKHfFCCc8Q6AEILjAB#v=onepage&q=john%20mackay%20strathnaver%201517&f=false accessed 6 October 2017. Also see page 147 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* where more of the song is given. One line discusses the *'columns'* of those fighting in the battle. This shows the fiction – *'columns'* are heavily associated with trained troops, not civilians.

would help the MacHamishes keep the wadset[407] of Killernan. In other words, William did not own Killernan and the actual owner of the property – the Countess of Sutherland – presumably could take it back at any time if she repaid the money wadsetted to her for it.[408] If Killernan Gunns did not fight the Countess of Sutherland's enemies then one can readily imagine the Killernan wadset being reversed and Gunns being homeless (albeit wealthy from the repayment of the wadset). And then where would the Gunns go as the Countess basically owned all the land in far north Scotland?

It is not clear when the battle happened, I suspect it was after 6 December. Sir Robert Gordon noted[409] that Adam Gordon Earl of Sutherland went to Edinburgh in 1517 to *'dispatch some of his affairs which did concerne his estate'*. Note the word *'his'*. In the preceding paragraph Sir Robert Gordon discussed the death of John, Lord Gordon at Kinloss in Moray on 5 December 1517. This John, Lord Gordon was Adam Gordon's nephew being the son of Alexander Gordon, the 3rd Earl of Huntly. It is reasonable to assume that Adam Gordon went to the Kinloss Abbey for the funeral and to Edinburgh for discussion of the impact of the death with family and lawyers. December would explain why his wife stayed at home. A trip to Edinburgh by the Earl in another season would, one suspect, have meant the Countess of Sutherland would also have gone to the capital. As well, the hardships of a Scottish winter could readily encourage men to think of what could be gained by raiding neighbours, at other times crops and animals would need tending. Having someone at home in Winter could help protect an estate from raiders.

Sir Robert Gordon notes that the battle was a long fight and that the two subordinate leaders (including William) fought until *'nightfall.'*[410] Nightfall on a winter Scottish night is, what, 4pm? Earlier? And it makes sense, who calls off a battle before it's dark? No-one in a battle offers an early finish so one can have afternoon tea…

Sir Robert Gordon's account is questionable as the person who was meant to have led the Countess of Sutherland's forces seems to have been in prison[411] but whether this was an error or an attempt to inflate the importance of his family is not clear (the supposed leader was the Countess of Sutherland's half-brother). I suspect it to be an error. Why would you try and manipulate a fact which was checkable? To manipulate would be more sensibly done by always giving positive motives to Gordons. But this aspect does not involve the Gunns so it does not matter.

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[407] To restate on wadset. In essence you wadset land for a period of time by paying the owner of that land a sum of money which had to be returned by the owner at the end of the wadset period. If the owner did not return the money then the wadsetter owned the land. The length of a wadset could vary, and it could be for a very long time. For example, a 1786 wadset was redeemable at the death of the original wadsetter or every nine or nineteen years thereafter. See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ieVCAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA16551&lpg=PA16551&dq=wadset+length+time&source=bl&ots=cwCajZ1pDQ&sig=gHs-8xiEeykDSXWJP6daeuEgI24&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjS_t-x4tnWAhXMXhoKHRYRAy8Q6AEILDAB#v=onepage&q=wadset%20length%20time&f=false accessed 5 October 2017. The wadset of Killernan was probably given to James, and then passed to his heir and so on. The Sutherland Estate wadsets of this time no longer exist so we do not know the exact conditions of the Killernan wadset but it is reasonable to assume they would have matched the general wadsets of the time.

[408] See pages 414 onwards, of John Erskine of Carnock, *An Institute of the Law of Scotland Volume 1*.

[409] Pages 90 – 91, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*

[410] Page 91, Sir Robert Gordon, *ibid*.

[411] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Torran_Dubh accessed 15 September 2017. As well Sir David Dalrymple has this Alexander Gordon 'in ward'. See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=LicAAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA142&dq=Alexander+Sutherland+brother+of+the+Countess+of+Sutherland&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiC6_uS3PzWAhXB7hoKHWfxCnsQ6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Alexander%20Sutherland%20brother%20of%20the%20Countess%20of%20Sutherland&f=false accessed 19 October 2017.

Various oral accounts / songs are around concerning this battle and are mentioned by the Reverend Alexander Sage *'almost three hundred years later'*[412] but these should be ignored as they are too long from the time to be viewed as accurate history. I note these Sage accounts make reference only to Gunns, not 'Clan Gunn'. And they refer to *'MacHamish of Sutherland'* not *'Chief of the Clan Gunn'*; if the myth believers want to accept that this battle involved many Gunns then they must also accept there was no 'Clan Gunn' and no 'Clan Gunn Chief' involvement.

It is to be regretted that Sir Robert Gordon also added to the Gunn / Keith myths[413] by writing *'William Gunn, son of James, and grandson of the Crowner, intercepted in Sutherland George Keith of Ackergill and his son, with twelve domestics (and) ... cut off the whole party'*[414] sometime after 1517. In other words, a William – presumably with others – was meant to have killed Keiths and servants.[415] Given the years this had to be William (4,4) and not William (3,3) as he would have been far too old; the wrong William is the first problem with this account. William (4,4) was the Coroner's great–grandson. It all is highly unlikely. Firstly, I have already explored how Gunns and Keiths did not have a feud at all, so revenge for a non-existing feud is obviously absurd. See chapter 7. Secondly, the idea that a 'grandson' would take revenge for an event which killed his grandfather about seventy years earlier is ludicrous; that's a huge time gap and meant killing no-one involved in the supposed Keith murder of the Coroner and it also involved killing *'domestics'* (servants) which seems gratuitously nasty. Thirdly it's no longer the mid-1450s, time had moved on. Sutherland now had an Earl and laws. One could not just go around murdering assorted people; the Sherriff of Inverness from 1503 was allowed to appoint sub-Sheriffs with courts at Wick and Dornoch[416] so the supposed killing of fourteen people – including powerful people – would certainly have meant the law would have heard of it and a trip to the courts would follow, but there is no mention of that in Sir Robert Gordon's book. Fourthly, the battle of Torran Dubh was a battle for William (4,4) to preserve property; why would he then risk losing it by involvement in a pointless feud (especially, as said, when the feud did not exist)? If he did murder these people then his property would have been forfeited to the King. Finally, it is worth noting that the Countess of Sutherland was related through her marriage to Adam Gordon[417] to the Keiths who were Earl Marischals of Scotland; the Keiths of Ackergill being a secondary branch of that family. The idea that William killed relatives of the richest and most powerful person in his area of Scotland is not logical, especially as the Countess owned the land he lived on. As well, it's the Earl of Caithness who got into lots of trouble about Ackergill and the Keiths (including jailing them) in the 1550s; it's all recorded[418] and he has to get pardoned by the Queen. If it's recorded for the Earl of Caithness a few years later an even worse event in killing the Keiths would certainly have made the

[412] Page 69, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[413] Page 92, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland*.
[414] Page 88, James T. Calder, *Sketch of the Civil and Traditional History Of Caithness, from the tenth century etc.*
[415] Page 82 onwards, Donald Sage *Memorablia Domestica,* (see also Mark Rugg Gunn page 69 on) embellished Gordon's story to include a Royal Pardon for the Keith involved at St Tayre's. But that's absurd – the Coroner died in the mid-1450s, this supposed killing was after 1517. The Keith involved in the supposed killing of the Coroner was not living seventy years after the 'murder' of the Coroner. There is further nonsense about MacHamish being drunk and sobering up, cutting the head of George Keith in two and so on.
[416] Page 386, Barbara Crawford, *The Northern Kingdoms; Orkney and Caithness from AD 870 to 1470.* Page 122, Ian Grimble *Chief of Mackay* points out that in 1631 King Charles 1 created the position of Sherriff of Sutherland including Strathnaver and the position was held by the Earl of Sutherland. Again, the idea that the Highlands was totally lawless was wrong.
[417] Adam's great, great grandmother was Elizabeth Keith whose father was William Keith, Earl Marischal.
[418] *Origines Parochiales Scotiae Part 1.* See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=737lAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA779&dq=Earl+of+Caithness+1556&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjKlcrNnpvXAhXMJsAKHQ9oAB8Q6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Earl%20of%20Caithness%201556&f=false accessed 31 October 2017.

historic documents. And it's not in any documents. The whole story just does not ring true; did Sir Robert Gordon just swallow a tall tale and repeat it? I suspect so.

William MacHamish Gunn had the following children:

5.5 CHIEF UNKNOWN MACHAMISH GUNN was born in the 1510s.
ii ALEXANDER GUNN was born around 1512. No known issue.

Generation 5

5.5 CHIEF UNKNOWN MACHAMISH GUNN (William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born in the 1510s.

As previously said, we need a new MacHamish around every thirty years; generations must roll on.

This next MacHamish[419] could be the anonymous male MacHamish of Sir Robert Gordon's account. There is a 1542 battle (Aldi-Be-Beth) where a Mack-wic-Kaimes of *'Killiernan'* is on the side of 'good' and helps attack invading Mackays.[420] Sir Robert Gordon also mentions the work of a MacHamish in keeping out all sorts of undesirables in 1549[421] and he[422] also has a MacHamish of Killernan involved at the battle of Garvary – but all with no first name. He also has a '*Mack-wic-Kames'* being one of the leaders at a 1556 battle. These events have no mention of other Gunn involvement; no matter how much mythic Gunn history would like it to be otherwise MacHamish was not a Clan leader / Chief. This Unknown MacHamish b 1510s was the right age for MacHamish challenges of this time; his father would have been too old.

This MacHamish had a son David Gunn (6,6) born in the 1530s. I am making an assumption David is from Unknown MacHamish but he could be from the following Alexander MacHamish (5).

Unknown MacHamish Gunn had the following child: 6.6 CHIEF DAVID GUNN was born 1530s.

[419] Page 20, Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* gives the name of William, seemingly quoting Gordon. But when checked against pages 107 and 108 of Sir Robert Gordon's *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* Gordon did not apply a name to the person involved in the battles.
[420] Page107, Robert Gordon, *ibid.*
[421] Page 108, Robert Gordon, *ibid.*
[422] Page 135, Robert Gordon, *ibid.*

5. ALEXANDER MACHAMISH GUNN

The preceding Unknown MacHamish (5,5) may have had a brother; there is a record for an Alexander Jameson[423] in Wester Killernan in 1564. Yes, next door to the traditional MacHamish Gunn property of Killernan there lived another MacHamish - Jameson - Gunn and Wester Killernan may have been part of the greater Killernan property. This brother could have been the person who fought in the battles mentioned in the life of Unknown MacHamish (5,5) – or some of the battles as MacHamish is (as already discussed) an anonymous title indicating a person from a particular family. One definite subsidiary MacHamish / Jameson – namely this Alexander - shows the term MacHamish is open to all 'sons' (and daughters?) of James over many generations. There is no second number attached to this Alexander MacHamish as he has no known issue.

This Alexander could be generation 6 but I think that unlikely due to the years.

* AN HISTORICAL SWEEP

Much of the Highland's history of the 1500s was caused by the Earl of Caithness who, with the help of the Aberach Mackays, being 'involved' in Sutherland. Depending on the time (and which Earls) this may be either with or against the Earl of Sutherland.

The Queen Regent visited Inverness in 1556[424] and dispensed judgement; this again showed the Highlands was not a totally lawless world. The Earl of Caithness was jailed (but granted remission according to the *Origines Parochiales Scotiae*[425]) and the Chief of the Mackays was later captured at the battle of Garvary in consequence of the Queen Regent's decision, and jailed. A MacHamish was involved in the capture. The Earl of Sutherland was the person who organised the capture of the Mackay Chief. John Leslie's history records vaguely that the Glengwn (Clan Gunn / Glen Gunn) had *'done great injures and wrongs to the country of Sutherland nixt adjacent to them … sundry pledges was received for the Glengwn, who was kept in some strengths for their good rule during the Quene regent's pleasure'*.[426] In other words the Queen removed the two main people who were causing the disorder in Caithness and Sutherland. She liked the Earl of Sutherland who worked for her. The Gunns were basically told to 'behave.' In modern terms it is as though the Queen took out the nasty lot who she blamed namely the MacKays and Caithness, and said now just 'calm down' Gunns…

It is not clear which Gunns were involved, nor exactly when, all this happened. As such it is not possible to award these events to a particular MacHamish.

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[423] Page 740 *Origines Parochiales Scotiae Part 1*. See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=737lAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA779&dq=Earl+of+Caithness+1556&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjKlcrNnpvXAhXMJsAKHQ9oAB8Q6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Earl%20of%20Caithness%201556&f=false accessed 31 October 2017 which records *'Alexander Jameson in Westir Killernane witnesses a seisin of Doill and Carrell in 1564…'.* https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=737lAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA779&dq=Earl+of+Caithness+1556&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjKlcrNnpvXAhXMJsAKHQ9oAB8Q6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Earl%20of%20Caithness%201556&f=false accessed 31 October 2017.

[424] Page 256 John Leslie *The History of Scotland* etc. shows that page 77, Mark Rugg Gunn *Clan Gunn* is not accurate.

[425] *Origines Parochiales Scotiae Part 1*. Page 779. See https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=737lAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA779&dq=Earl+of+Caithness+1556&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjKlcrNnpvXAhXMJsAKHQ9oAB8Q6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Earl%20of%20Caithness%201556&f=false accessed 31 October 2017.

[426] Page 257 John Leslie *The History of Scotland* etc.

Strathnaver

Many stories[427] exist for how much land Gunns supposedly owned in ancient times. Gunns lived all over the northern Highlands as they were the original inhabitants. Owned, no. Tenanted, yes. This land included the Province of Strathnaver[428] which stretched from Eddrachillis in the west though to the north coast through to Bighouse in the east.

'By 1553 the Bishop of Orkney had obtained the overlordship of Strathnaver … and bestowed the heritable use upon the Chief of Mackay… since time immemorial the Chiefs of Mackay had been described in every official document as the rulers of the entire province of Strathnaver.'[429]

The above extracts clearly shows the Gunns were subordinate to the Mackays throughout Strathnaver; in other words the Gunns were tenants. Closely linked estates 'owned' by the extended Killernan family at a late period – see page **123** – are a different matter.

Generation 6

6.6 CHIEF DAVID GUNN (Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born in the 1530s.

David MacHamish (6,6) was son of 5.5 Chief Unknown MacHamish Gunn. David does not appear in the MacHamish mythic stories. The reason for the first name David is that his son is identified as Alexander MacDavid[430]; see the following life. Obviously, a David MacHamish is therefore needed as his father. Was David (6,6) the elder / eldest son of MacHamish (5,5)? Probably, but options exist.

It is likely that this David MacHamish is the MacHamish mentioned by Sir Robert Gordon[431] who said that, in 1570, *'MacHamish of Strathully'* being one of the *'Earl of Sutherland's trustiest freinds and followers'* went into *'into Glengary, his cuntrey.'* The Earl of Sutherland's friends had to keep low in and around the Highlands of Scotland at this time as the Earl of Caithness was extremely cross with the Earl of Sutherland and that Earl's supporters / friends, and the Earl of Caithness was the stronger party. It seems the Earl of Caithness had wardship over the Earl of Sutherland until the Earl of Sutherland attained his majority in 1573. There is no suggestion that MacHamish going to ground involved other Gunns. The *'MacHamish of Strathully'* is unlikely to be the Unknown MacHamish (5,5) b. 1510 as he would have been too old as a friend or the Earl of Sutherland.

Chief David Gunn had: 7.7 CHIEF ALEXANDER MACDAVID[7] GUNN who was born about 1560. And, importantly, he also had 7.8.WILLIAM BEAG[7] GUNN who was obviously born later than his brother, see PART ONE B.

[427] Page 34 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* as one example.
[428] For an excellent map see Page 36 of ed. John Baldwin *The Province of Stathnaver*.
[429] Page 131-132, Ian Grimble, *Clans and Chiefs.*
[430] Page 108 A. Mackay *The Book of Mackay*, page 199 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* and page 361 Sir Robert Gordon *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[431] Page 157, Sir Robert Gordon, *ibid*.

Generation 7

7.7 CHIEF ALEXANDER MACDAVID GUNN (David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1560. He died around 1624.

Alexander MacDavid Gunn (7,7) married Barbara Mackay, a daughter from the second marriage of Iye Du Mackay of Farr, 12th of Strathnaver, chief of Clan Mackay.[432] She was born about 1570. Barbara's niece MARY CHRISTIANE (DAME) (LADY FOWLIS) MACKAY married Alexander 'Killernan' Gunn (8,9).

The Alexander who married Barbara Mackay is twice in *The History of the House and Clan Mackay* as Alexander MacDavid.[433] Alexander, son of David (6.6). David; that name does not appear in the traditional lists of the Gunn Chiefs. One David mentioned in a book could be a printing error, twice firms the idea that David was the father of Alexander MacDavid Gunn of Killernan (7,7), hence David Gunn (6,6) had to exist. Thomas Sinclair also adds support for the name.[434]

Barbara had a brother Huistean (Hugh) Du Mackay 13th of Strathnaver who is consistently given as born in 1561 in various texts and dcuments.[435] Huistean is the first child of his father's second marriage. A birth year for Barbara of about 1570 is reasonable as *The Book of Mackay* records[436] her as the fifth and last born of the second marriage. A birth year of c.1560-1570 therefore seems reasonable for Alexander MacDavid (7,7). But it is the definite birth year of about 1570 for Barbara which causes huge problems for some Clan Gunn myths.

The first problem is the birth year of around 1560-1570 for Alexander MacDavid (7,7). As already discussed, Alexander's (7,7) supposed father[437] for the myth believers was William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3) who has a provisional birth year of around 1450. The problem is obvious; are we meant to believe that William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3) fathered a child when he was a hundred years old? Such a biologically improbable event would be remembered – and it isn't so remembered. This is just one of the reasons why the Alexander who married Barbara Mackay cannot be the Alexander who was supposedly the son of William MacHamish Cattach / Cattigh (3,3).

And there is more on Alexander MacDavid (7,7) who could also be called Alexander Davidson. Sir Robert Gordon records that an Alexander Davidson was still in Sutherland in 1624.[438] Sinclair also has

[432] Pages106-7, A. Mackay, *The Book of Mackay.*
[433] Page106, Robert Mackay, *History of The House and Clan Mackay*.
[434] Page 199, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*, *'Iye Mackay, who died in 1571 had a daughter 'married to Alexander Davidson''*. Page 64, Thomas Sinclair, *ibid*., *'daughter of Iye MacKay, who died in in 1571, was married to Alexander Gunn (Davidson).'*
[435] Page106-7, A. Mackay, *The Book of Mackay.*
[436] Page106, A. Mackay, *ibid*.
[437] Page 166, Mark Rugg Gunn *Clan Gunn* is but one of many examples.
[438] Page 361 Robert Gordon *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.* Sir Robert Gordon is geographically poor in this area. He suggests that Alexander Davidson retrieved his ancient possession of Braemore, which traditionally is the land of the Robson / Braemore Gunns from the second son of the Coroner, and that the Robson Gunn got the land of Kinbrace which was by 1638 in the hands of the Donald the scholar MacHamish line. I think Robert Gordon has, at best, reversed who got which land and which would suggest names and people have been wrongly connected – MacRobs got back their Braemore land, Alexander Davidson may have got Kinbrace

an excerpt of a document[439] of 21 November 1623 which mentioned *'Sir Robert Gordon knight-baronet and Alexander Gunn alias Jameson'* which also supports the idea that Alexander lived after 1613.

There is a potential problem with Alexander MacDavid's (7,7) death year; if Gordon was correct Alexander *'Davidsone'* Gunn was alive in 1624[440] but his son William Mhor (8) supposedly succeeded to the lands of Killernan in 19 February 1614.[441] Both can't be right unless Alexander MacDavid passed on the lands early – a possibility. An alternative answer is that old legal documents often have a summary of the contents and date on the outside of closely folded documents, certainly the 1650s ones I have seen from the Sutherland Estate do. It is not unreasonable to assume that William Mhor's Killernan document was really 1624 as a scribbled 2 or 1 can look similar. All references to this document lack further detail suggesting that all which was read was the exterior. On balance it is reasonable to assume that William Mhor did not inherit Killernan until 1624 or a shade earlier, which would be when his father died. The '1614' document can no longer be found.

Another major problem about the mythic Alexander Gunn is with his supposed children. Traditionally an Alexander MacHamish of Killernan had two sons both called William; the elder was William Mhor / Mor and the younger William Beag / Bheg. That's very unusual; it is quite possible to name another child with the name of an earlier child who had died but supposedly both William Mor and William Beag lived. Two living children with the same name is, at the very least, extremely rare. I have never heard of it in any use other than with Clan Gunn fantasy history. This child problem is added to by the real detail known about Alexander's (7,7) actual wife but we know absolutely nothing about his supposed second wife. That's odd; one would expect both wives to be known in similar detail.

Solution? William Mhor (8) was the *son* of Alexander MacDavid (7,7), but William Beag / Bheag (7,8) was the *brother* of Alexander MacDavid (7,7) and the evidence for this is in their lives[442] in this chapter. Given this, the problem of lack of information of Alexander's supposed second wife and the ludicrous idea of having two sons alive at the same time and with the same name disappears.

Alexander MacDavid Gunn (7,7) and Barbara Mackay had the following child: 8 WILLIAM MHOR GUNN who was born about 1593, he died without issue.

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7.8 WILLIAM BEAG GUNN – see PART ONE B.

William Beag Gunn is pivotal in Clan Gunn history.

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but we have no record to support the idea. Was Kinbrace a slip of writing for Killernan? This Braemore link error is repeated by page 172 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

[439] Page 113, Thomas Sinclair, The Gunns. Page 106 A. Mackay, *The Book of Mackay*.

[440] Page 361, Sir Robert Gordon *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*

[441] Page 165, Sir R. Douglas, *The Scots Peerage* 'William Macalister … succeeded to the lands of Killernan 19 February 1614' and page 106, A. Mackay, *The Book of Mackay*.

[442] It also makes logical sense – William 'Beag' means BIG. William 'Mhor' means 'little.' Obviously, Uncle Beag would be the bigger, older Gunn. The use of 'big' and 'little' to indicate different generations appears in other cultures such as Tristan da Cunha. See page 120, D. M. Booy, *Rock of Exile A Narrative of Tristan da Cunha*, 1957.

* SOME FURTHER HISTORY

1) Alexander MacDavid's (7,7) wife had a brother Huistean[443] (sometimes Uisdean) Du Mackay who was Chief of the Mackays - and was the first Chief of the Mackay who was a *'vassal of a feudal overlord'*[444] namely the Earl of Huntly who later also became the Earl of Sutherland.[445] He participated to a degree in the mess which was the attempt by the Earl of Caithness and the Earl of Sutherland in getting rid of the Gunns. This should mainly be viewed as an attempt to deal with the more lawless Braemore Gunn / Caithness Gunns, see chapter 11.1 for more on this branch of the family. Sir Robert Gordon pointed out that the attempt to get rid of the Gunns was against *'chiefly such of that* (Gunn) *tribe as dwelt in Caithness, because they were judged to be the principal authors of ... troubles and commotions…. '*[446]

2) It is noteworthy that Larence Nowell's map of Scotland produced sometime between 1561 and 1566 detailed Caithness and Sutherland and showed the major landowners in red - namely the Earl of Caithness, the Earl of Sutherland and the Mackays. The Gunns were not shown – the castles of the region are also given and there is no Gunn castle.[447] Again, proof that the Gunns were of no real importance and that the supposed Gunn castles, dealt with in chapter 8.5, are fiction.

3) The Battle of Allt Camhna / Altgown was meant to occur in 1586. It's another of those Gunn / Mackay battles - or not. Sir Robert Gordon's account has mention that *'one of the principalls of the Clangun in Strathnaver called Angus-Roy'* [448]was killed but there is no mention of a Clan Gunn Chief in the battle. Nor do we know anything more about this Angus-Roy.

4) In 1589 a *'John James-sone'... a principall gentleman of Catteynes'*[449] was murdered; here again is a possibility that MacHamish is a title held by more than one person at a time. There is no John at this time in the traditional MacHamish line – and the person was significant in Caithness, not Sutherland. One must consider that not all Jamesons were of the MacHamish line, the further away from Killernan the more questionable the attribution of the MacHamish family identifier….

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[443] Uistean's son Donald Mackay was appointed a Justice of the Peace before 1610; the Highlands were not as totally lawless as many believe. Page 59, Ian Grimble, *Chief of Mackay.* This was possibly related to the Mackays being Justiciars of the Diocese of Caithness from earlier times. Page 43, Ian Grimble, *ibid*.
[444] Page 42, Ian Grimble *ibid*.
[445] Pages 40-43, Ian Grimble *ibid.*
[446] Quoted on page 44, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[447] See page 41, C. Fleet, M. Wilkes and S. W. J. Withers, *Scotland Mapping The Nation.*
[448] Page 183, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland*.
[449] Page 189, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

Generation 8

8. CHIEF WILLIAM 'MHOR / MOR' GUNN Died without issue. b. 1590? Alive 1624.

William Mor…of whom nothing memorable is recorded

Rev. Sage, page 10, Clan Gunn *written 1801.*

Chief William Mhor Gunn (8) was the son of Chief Alexander McDavid Gunn (7.8). As already discussed, William's (8) mother Barbara MacKay was born around 1570 and his father Alexander MacDavid (7,7) was born perhaps a few years earlier than his wife. This gives William (8) an approximate birth year of 1590 which matches the 1590 date on the 1896 Gunn tree. William Mhor (8) is recorded[450] as *'William Macallister'* (son of Alexander) in *The Book of Mackay* which also records that William MacAllister succeeded to the lands of Killearnan 19 February 1614[451] but, as already discussed in his father's life, it's far more likely to be 1624.

A William MacHamish of Killernan was seriously involved[452] – with many others - in a September 1623 battle against the Earl of Caithness; a company of the *'Clangun'* were involved but they were not part of the troops led by William MacHamish. This William MacHamish may have been William Mhor (8) but it could, just, be William Beag (7,8). It could also be another William MacHamish living at Killernan. The 'of' has to be viewed as questionable; 1623 was probably when no William was legally 'of Killernan' as William Mhor's father was probably still alive. If William Mhor (8) was the person meant perhaps he was given an honorary 'of Killernan' as his father was frail or dead given William Mhor (8) inherited his father's land the following year.

There are myths attached to William Mhor (8) and his supposed descendants. These stories fail mainly because of William Mhor's (8) birth year of about 1590. One problem, already discussed, is shown by Mark Rugg Gunn[453] who wrote William Mhor (8) assisted 'adventurers / settlers' on the Isle of Lewis – but these events happened in 1601[454] when William Mhor (8) would be about ten years old. This error was probably caused by the belief that only one person could be a MacHamish at one time - Sir Robert Gordon had *William Gun-Mack-wic-Kames Killeirnan (*William Mhor was not mentioned) on the Isle of Lewis but in later books this William MacHamish somehow changed to being William Mhor (8). The William MacHamish on the Isle of Lewis was William Beag (7,8). Further William Mhor (8) problems include the idea that William Mhor (8) gave *'Kinbrace to his younger brother William Beag, on wadset of 500 merks'*[455] which was discussed in William Beag's (7,8) life.

[450] Page 106, A Mackay, *The Book of Mackay.*
[451] Page 106, A. Mackay, *ibid*.
[452] Page 378, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[453] Page 167, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[454] Page 242, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* has the name as 'of' Killernan' which can be ignored – it is not a legal document of the time but a later history where small confusions can occur.
[455] Page 167, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

This leaves William Mhor (8) with no documentary support other than for who his parents were and that he inherited Killernan in 1624. There is no record of marriage nor children; real Clan Gunn Chief history therefore does not involve descendants from William Mhor (8).

But the Chiefs continue as is discussed in William Beag's life (7,8) – Chief Alexander Gunn (8,9) was of Killernan by 1636 so Chief William Mhor (8) had to be dead by then.

PART ONE B – 7.8 William Beag Gunn, the pivotal early Gunn

7.8 WILLIAM BEAG GUNN (David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1561.

William Beag (7,8) was the second son of Chief David Gunn (6,6). He is really important as his children take over as the main Gunns – Chiefs of the Clan – after the death of William's nephew Chief William Mhor Gunn (8).

The letter accompanying the 1822 Tree wrote that *'William Beag McKeamish is brought in among the direct descendants of Chrunar and that he became an additional chieftain though he is only a collateral branch.'* This means William Beag is a chieftain but from a collateral branch of the Coroner's line. This fits exactly with the idea that the direct line from Coroner Gunn dies out and that William Beag's line takes over.

The 1896 Gunn tree has William Beag[456] (7,8) with a year of 1560 attached, possibly a birth year – Alexander MacDavid (7,7), his brother, has 1551 on the tree. Sir Robert Gordon[457] viewed William Beag as the main person of the Gunns in Sutherland; was Alexander MacDavid (7,7) more the quiet farmer? Crucially the 1896 tree also gives a year of 1590 to William Mhor (8). Now we can quibble as to the full accuracy of the years shown but what is important is the generational difference implied by the thirty years gap between William Beag (7,8) and his nephew William Mhor (8).

The Book of Mackay[458] records for 1589 that a *'MacHamish Gunn of Killearnan again wasted Caithness with great ferocity'*. This claim is of interest – I ignore the *'of'* in *'of Killernan'* as an error and not a legal statement of owning Killernan but showing coming from the property - but it is not clear that the MacHamish was William Beag (7,8). It might have been his brother Alexander MacDavid (7,7) but, given William Beag's (7,8) known later violent history, it is reasonable to assume it was William Beag (7,8). If these raids were on behalf of the Earl of Sutherland that would also suit William Beag's (7,8) later actions.

The generational difference between William Beag (7,8) and William Mhor (8) is clearly shown by history – Sir Robert Gordon[459] records a *William-Mack-wickames* as the leader of forces the Earl of Sutherland sent to the Isle of Lewis around year 1600 / 1601.[460] The Earl of Sutherland's force were part of a greater body to dispossess the islanders (*'genocide'* in Ian Grimble's view[461] - legitimately as they could use *'slaughter, mutilation, fire-raising or other inconveniences'*[462] as this force had the King

[456] Pages 272-273, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland*. William Beag (7,8) is viewed by Gordon as *'Chieftane of the Clangun in Southerland'.* As previously said Gordon uses Chief / Chieftain to mean main person, not 'Clan Chief'. It shows that William Beag is viewed as the main Gunn, not his brother Alexander (7,7).
[457] Page 273, Sir Robert Gordon, *ibid.*
[458] Page 116, A. Mackay, *The Book of Mackay*.
[459] Page 273, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[460] Page 175, James Hunter *Last of the Free*. *'King James wrote Lewis's colonisers were to proceed 'not by agreement* with (the Lewis people) *but by extirpation of thame'.* That's ethnic cleansing of a high order…
[461] Page 142, Ian Grimble, *Clans and Chiefs.*
[462] Quoted Page 14 Ronald Williams, *The Heather and the Gale*, but being from *1598, Record of the Privy Council, V.*

of Scotland on their side[463]). Being leader suggests this William MacHamish was a fighter / planner of experience. This William has to be of an older generation than William Mhor (8) as William Mhor (8) could only have been about ten years old in 1600 as, already discussed, his mother was born around 1570.[464] There is no mention of other Gunns on the Isle of Lewis expedition, this activity is more a profession for William Beag (7,8). Again, we have MacHamish as a family indicator not a title held by one person.

Gordon also has William Gun-Mack-wic-Kames *'Killeirnan'* active in July 1601[465] on the side of the Earl of Sutherland against the Earl of Caithness. This William was not part of the main force, he was in charge *'with some of the Gordons … sent to draw a circuit about, and secretly to compasse the enemie, thereby to invade them at their backs.'*[466] The Earl of Sutherland's side won the battle. Again, this was a William MacHamish with no mention of other Gunns; it is not a 'Gunn clan' battle. Again, this MacHamish seems a professional fighter and again this William MacHamish cannot be William Mhor (8) as William Mhor (8) would be too young, so presumably it was William Beag (7,8).

The 13th of February 1602 had[467] Earl John Gordon (c.1576-1615) of Sutherland and others visit a MacHamish in / of Killernan via the Glen of Loth; a snow storm hit them and those that drank whisky died but the Earl and some others survived. Given his work for the Earl of Sutherland in 1600 and 1601 I suspect the Earl visited William Beag (7,8); William Mhor (8) would have been too young to be visited by the Earl of Sutherland whereas the Earl had already had much business with the older William Beag (7,8).

There was violence in 1617 and 1620 (documented in 1624) which goes with William Beag's (7,8) warlike behaviour; for the 1620 / 1624 event see the documentary discussion in Alexander of Killernan and of Navidale's (8,9) life. William Beag (7,8) was the right age and had adult sons with the correct names by 1617 and 1620 for these documents to apply to them and him. The sons were his eldest Alexander of Killernan and of Navidale (8,9) and his second son John (8,10) in Navidale of Borrobol. Both Alexander (8,9) and John (8,10) were probably born in the 1590s. William Mhor (8) was born in about 1590 so he was too young to have adult sons in 1617 / 1620 although the myths have it otherwise.[468]

Some of the history attributed to William Mhor (8) is unsavoury and actually applied to William Beag (7,8).[469] Mark Rugg Gunn records an October 1617 incident where a *'William Jameson in Killearnan and his son Alexander 'in' Borrobill* (Borrobol) (and) *John Jameson in Suisgill'* attack, with others, James Ross, the third son of the Laird of Balmucky. His source is unknown. William Beag (7,8) was always in Killernan and his eldest son was Alexander (8,9) and his second son was John – but he may not be John Jameson in Suisgill. Given William Mhor's (8) approximate birth year meant having an

[463] Pages 38-41 Donald MacDonald, *Lewis A History of the Island.*
[464] This historic absurdity has been made due to the mythic belief that 'MacHamish' was a title only held by one Gunn at a time.
[465] Page 242, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland*. Gordon records the name as *'of'* Killernan which can be ignored – it is not a legal document of the time but a later history where small confusions can occur.
[466] Page 242 Sir Robert Gordon, *ibid.*
[467] Page 246, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[468] Page 117 and page 167, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[469] Page 117, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*.

adult son helping him be violent in 1617 is impossible. Even more so when the adult son was old enough to be living away from home *'in'* Borrobol which was a linked Gunn of Killernan property seemingly held by the next adult in line to Killernan. I suspect it was a separate Gunn property as I discuss in the life of George Gunn of Borrobol (9,16). Note, again, how two William MacHamishes exist at the same time; MacHamish is only a family indicator.

A 1624 writ[470] includes mention of '*John Jameson, Alister Jameson … Alister MacAlister Jameson … in Strathullie'* who were criminal and robbers; again we have more than one Jameson, but it is unclear if these were MacHamishes. And more than one MacHamish / Jameson family could easily have lived on the Killernan estate;[471] the assumption that only one family lived on it at any one time is as I have often said a modern, flawed one. The ability to say that any particular MacHamish / Jameson of Killernan did something is often not possible due to the way MacHamish applied to many people.

William Beag (7,8) was, as already said, brother to Alexander MacDavid MacHamish (7,7) who married Barbara Mackay. This would explain William being at Killernan as close family could sensibly be of use on the estate. As well, it might explain why he was active in battle; he was not meant to inherit Killernan so was establishing a different career of 'adventurer'. He may also have just been of a more aggressive temperament. It is not clear when William Beag died.

But crucially it's William Beag (7,8) who was the founder of the Gunns of Killernan and Navidale after his nephew William Mhor (8) died without known issue.

William Beag's (7,8) four sons (I note how few females remain in Gunn history, are some missing here?) were –

8.9. CHIEF ALEXANDER 'KILLERNAN' GUNN was born about 1590. He died about 1658. He married MARY CHRISTIANE (DAME) (LADY FOWLIS) MACKAY no earlier than April 1635 being when her first husband died. She was born about 1598, based on her first marriage in July 1619[472]. She died by 27 January 1658.[473] Mary's aunt Barbara Mackay had married Alexander MacDavid Gunn (7,7).

8.10. JOHN IN NAVIDALE OF BORROBOL GUNN was born about 1591.

8.11. DONALD 'SCHOLAR OF KINBRACE' GUNN[474] was born about 1592.

8.12. WILLIAM OF ACHENECCAN GUNN was born about 1593.

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[470] Page 118, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*.
[471] Of course, many tenants not of the family could also be on such an estate.
[472] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Hector_Munro,_1st_Baronet accessed 20 August 2018 which probably drew its information from page 84 Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Munros*.
https://archive.org/stream/historyofmunroso00mack/historyofmunroso00mack_djvu.txt accessed 20 August 2018.
[473] She was dead before her daughter Catherine (9,14) as shown by Catherine's marriage contract. National Records of Scotland (NRS) GD 84/1/27/7.
[474] The 1822 Tree records 'Donald Scholar' as son to 'Wm Beg.'

The 1868 / 1869 family trees have Donald the Scholar (8,11) and William of Acheneccan (8,12) as descendants of William Beag (7,8) including links down to Alexander 'Osclay' Gunn (11,31). The 1822 Tree also has Donald the Scholar as son of William 'Beg.'

The Sutherland Estate documents[475] of the 1671-1679 period clearly show, several times, a descent line involving various of these Gunns of Killernan and Navidale including their relationships to each other and properties / estates attached to them. These are legal documents of the time and so the order has to be accepted. The evidence is mainly shown in the lives of those sons. The descent order for William Beag's (7,8) eldest son Alexander Killernan Gunn (8,9) was, and the relationship is that given in the Sutherland Estate documents -

1. William Gunn (7,8) *'grandfather'* with no 'of' place attached to his name in any document.
2. Alexander Gunn (8,9) '*of Navidaill' 'his* (meaning the below John's) *father'*. And from another document *'of Killernan.'*
3. John Gunn (9,13) *'lawful son' 'of Killernan.'* In a 1679 document he was *'of Navidaill'* at the time his son was *'of Killernan.'*
4. Alexander Gunn (10) *'son to the said John Gunn'* and *'eldest lawful son'* suggesting at least two further sons. He was *'of Killernan.'* Now, both this Alexander and his father are identified as 'principalls' in a 1671 legal document; due to Scottish law this means that he may have been an adult at that time, but he could also have been an adolescent.

As said, these documents all start with a William who was never 'of' a place. There is only one person this lack 'of' place names works with and that's William Beag (7,8) as he was never the most senior person of an Estate. William Mhor would have been 'of' Killernan. This lack of 'of' proves the later Gunns of Killernan were not descended from William Mhor. With the lack of any known descent from William Mhor (8) – but with primary documents which clearly show the MacHamishes 'of Killernan' continued – the only possibility is that the descendants from William Beag (7,8) took over Killernan / Navidale.

By implication it suggests that William Beag (7,8) was either dead, or frail, by the time of William Mhor's (8) death as otherwise William Beag (7,8) would have been 'of' Navidale and / or of Killernan. This makes sense – William Beag (7,8) was a generation older than William Mhor (8).

I suspect William Mhor (8) died around 1635 as William Beag's (7,8) eldest son Alexander (8,9) took over Killernan before 1636. Did William Beag's (7,8) military work for the Earl of Sutherland help make the transfer of Killernan easier or was it just a normal transition of the property going to the next most senior line?

William Beag's (7,8) third son Donald the Scholar (8,11) had the wadset of Kinbrace in August 1638 (I have a copy of the wadset document); this is certainly after the Beag line took over the Killernan / Navidale property which happened before 1636. Such Killernan / Navidale property might explain how

[475] National Library of Scotland Sutherland Estate assorted documents from deposit 313, numbers 276 and 277.

the money was found for Kinbrace. Or was all of this paid for by William Beag's money earnt from his fighting time?

The mythic story that William Mhor (8) gave Kinbrace to his supposed *'younger brother'* William Beag (7,8)[476] is just wrong in so many ways starting with William Beag being older than William Mohr.

Donald the Scholar owned the Achentoul Estate at the time he took on the Kinbrace Estate in 1638. Achentoul included Grimachary where John Gunn 10,24 (who married Margaret Gunn 10,23 daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn 9,15) lived at one time. The 1896 Tree records six generations of Gunn owning Achentoul. It is unclear how they are linked to Donald Gunn.

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Of interest the guarantors of one of the documents for John Gunn (9,13) and his son Alexander (10) include Learable Gunns. I have no idea how Learable Gunns fit in but they were surely MacHamish linked given being guarantors and how close Learable is to Kildonan, Killernan, Borrobol and Kinbrace. The other Gunn guarantors were Donald Gunn of Kinbrace 'the Scholar' (8,11) and George Gunn of Borrobol (9,16) who was John Gunn in Navidale's (8,10) son. It is unclear when Learable Gunns start but it could be from William Beag's time.

[476] Page 167, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

PART TWO - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's eldest son was 8.9 Chief Alexander Gunn. His children included 9.13 Chief John 'Killernan / Navidale' Gunn and 9.15 Chief Donald Crotach Gunn

SUMMARY OF THE NOTABLE GUNNS OF PART TWO:

7.8 William Beag Gunn c. 1561- Discussed in Part One A and in detail in Part B. His descendants take over as Chief of the Gunns.
8.9 **Chief** Alexander 'Killernan' Gunn c. 1590 – c. 1657
9.13 **Chief** John 'Killernan Navidale' Gunn c. 1636 – . *He disappears from the records as do his children.*
9.14 Catherine Gunn c. 1637 – *Married. Descendants, obviously not Gunns.*
9. Alexander Gunn c. 1638 - *Married, no known descendants.*
9.15 **Chief** Donald Crotach Gunn c. 1642 – 1708. *Married, with ongoing descendants. He is discussed in Part Three.*

7.8 WILLIAM BEAG GUNN

See Part One B. It is clear from documents of the time that William Beag was not Chief, but some of his descendants were. In other words, with the death of Chief William Mhor / Mor without descendants, his uncle's line (William Beag) became the Clan Gunn Chief line.

William Beag had -

8.9 CHIEF ALEXANDER 'KILLERNAN' GUNN (William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1590. He died before 1658 (dead by 27 January 1658[477] and his wife Mary is also dead by this point). He married MARY CHRISTIANE (DAME) (LADY FOWLIS) MACKAY no earlier than April 1635. She was born about 1598 based on her first marriage which has been noted as 1619. She died by 27 January 1658.[478]

Alexander of Killernan and Navidale[479] (8,9) was the eldest son of William Beag (7,8). Alexander (8,9) would have had to be born around 1590 as his father had to be born in the 1560s or so. He was first cousin of William Mhor (8) and presumably took over at Killernan following William Mhor's (8) death. Alexander was 'of Killernan' by 1636 and dead by late January 1658 so these years mark the definite Clan Gunn Chief time but he may have been Chief before 1636.

There is a 1617 criminal record[480] for William Beag (7,8) 'in' Killernan and Alexander Gunn (8,9) in 'Borrobill' his son. William Beag (7,8) and (presumably at least some of his) children were in 'Killernan' but the most senior child from William Beag (7,8) was at Borrobol; as mentioned earlier

[477] NRS record GD84/1/20/1B.
[478] NRS GD 84/1/27/7.
[479] See NRS GD84/1/27/7 for detail.
[480] See page 117, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*

Borrobol was where the Gunn who would inherit Killernan lived. It is possible that originally Borrobol may have been part of the extended Killernan lands – if so, we do not know when it was separated from the Killernan property but it was separated by the time of George Gunn (9,16) of Borrobol. Alexander's (8,9) 'in' should be considered with care; without sighting the original documents the word could be a writing / printing mistake for 'of'; to restate 'of' means 'owns / or the wadsetter' with 'in' having a secondary place as in you lived at that property but it was not yours.

Alexander (8,9) was involved with criminal behaviour along with his brother John (8,10) - a record of complaint[481] exists against Alexander MacHamish (8,9) and John MacHamish (8,10) dated 14 June 1624[482] concerning an event of January 1620 – the complaint says that *'John M'Keymes in Navidale, and … Alest M'Keymes[483] his brother … took and led me captive as their bond slave, and abused myself… John MacHamish and Alexander MacHamish* (also) *… took away most wrongfully the whole of my property'.* So, two people were MacHamishes in this complaint, again proof that MacHamish was not a title held by a single person. The placement of John (8,10) first might reflect who was the nastier. John (8,10) being *'in Navidale'* by 1620 is of interest; it is possible he had rented some of Navidale as a tenant.

Sir Alexander Gordon was 'of' Navidale from at least 1616[484] until at least August 1631[485] when he retired to Ireland as he was Catholic, but the 1631 'of' may have been an historic leftover.[486] D. M Rose[487] says that Sir Alexander Gordon of Navidale granted in 1636 a *'bond for £800 in favour of Alexander of Killernan … in that way the Gunns got Navidale.'*[488] This provides the evidence that Alexander was 'of Killernan' before 1636. The document is confusing; a person taking over land either paid a wadset in advance of say £800 or signed a tack indicating the amount of money they would pay each year and how they would pay it, so it is more likely Alexander Gunn (8,9) paid Sir Alexander Gordon the sum of £800 rather than the reverse. 1636 works for why Sir Alexander Gordon would wadset the estate as he had left the country - and he was of the Gordons who owned Sutherland so had the ability to rent out Navidale. 1636 works well for Alexander (8,9) as he had taken over Killernan a little before this Navidale acquisition. Alexander's third brother Donald the Scholar (8,11) acquired Kinbrace in 1638 - both the Navidale and Kinbrace acquisitions suggest that the Killernan and / or William Beag's (7,8) money had not run out.

In August 1643 Alexander (8,9), was mentioned, along with other important people such as the Earl of Sutherland, in an Act of Parliament as *'Alexander Gun of Calelnan.'*[489] Alexander (8,9) also acted as witness[490] in a legal document 12 January 1644; again he was *'of Killernan'*. A further 1649 Act[491]

[481] Page 119, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* being a rough summary of pages 151-153, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[482] See page 152 Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[483] Page 152, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*, also spelt John M'Hamish and Alexander M'Hamish in the document.
[484] Page 77, Keith Brown, *Noble Power in Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution.* NRS GD84/1/11/13 for 9 July 1622.NRS GD 139/8 for 23 February 1668. The year also involved Sir Robert Gordon and Gunn Robsons in the burning of corn at Sandside; it is detailed in history texts and is briefly explored in chapter 11.
[485] Page 449, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[486] Page 30, David Dobson, *Scots-Scandinavian Links in Europe and America 1550-1850.*
[487] Page 167, Mark Rugg Gun *Clan Gunn* provides detail.
[488] Page 167, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*. provides detail.
[489] Page 82, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns.* And *Charles I: Translation; 1646, 3 November, Edinburgh, Parliament; Parliamentary Register; 26 March 1647; Legislation; Act anent the committees of war in the several shires; 1646/11/532.*
[490] NRS GB84 /1/20/2B and GB234, GD84/1/27/1B

again mentioned him being *'of Killernan'*, it also mentioned his brother John Gunn (8,10) of *'Barraboll'* (Borrobol) – no longer *'in Navidale.'* Being 'of Killernan' shows Alexander was Chief of the Clan Gunn.

A Sutherland Estate document[492] records a joint contract (bond) of 1652 between *'Alexander Gunn of Killernan'* (8,9) and *'John Gunn of Borboll'* (8,10) with the Duke of Sutherland. Note both Alexander and John were 'of' – but Alexander was 'of Killernan' and listed first. That suggests he was the more important brother. But John being 'of Borboll' clearly shows the Borrobol Estate was separate from the Killernan wadset. Now, you don't hold a joint, major contract in the mid-1600s with the Duke of Sutherland unless you are very closely related.[493] Lands mentioned included Killernan, Borboll, Learable and AuldBreakachie. Learable is interesting as it adds further to the idea that MacHamish Gunns have some link there but, as said, the nature of the link is not known. The writing of the document is fairly indecipherable but it might have something to do with the Borrobol Estate.

Marriage. Did Alexander get Killernan because of the importance of his marriage rather than because he was the senior son? Perhaps, and of course both reasons might apply. Alexander married Dame Mary Lady Foulis[494] whose first husband died April 1635[495] so Alexander's marriage to her was obviously after that date. Dame Mary's first husband was Sir Hector Munro 1st Baronet of Foulis and they married in July 1619[496] and so she would have been born around the same period as her husband namely 1600. This means the children from this Gunn marriage were born at the earliest to a mid thirty year old mother.

As already mentioned, Sir Alexander Gordon passed over Navidale Estate – and presumably Easter Balivanich - in 1636 to Alexander 'of Killernan.' Given that could have been the year after Alexander's marriage it suggests Navidale may have been bought by money Dame Mary Lady Foulis bought to the marriage. It has been wrongly suggested that she was given the lands of Navidale and Easter Balavanich in 1668 by her husband. That is inaccurate - it is their son Alexander (9) and his wife Christina Mackay to whom the 1668 document applies. Proof? Alexander (8,9) and Dame Mary Foulis are both *dead* by 1658.[497] As well, the 1658 document includes the name of 'Christina Mackay' who is the known wife of Alexander (9) of the next generation. Secondly Dame Mary Lady Foulis' husband Alexander (8,9) is shown to be dead before 27 January 1666[498] in a second National Records of Scotland document.

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[491] *Charles I: Translation; 1649, 4 January, Edinburgh, Parliament; Parliamentary Register; 15 February 1649; Legislation; Act for putting the kingdom in a posture of defence; 1649/1/133*. Pages 84-85, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

[492] Sutherland Estate documents deposit 313, number 297.

[493] It seems extremely unlikely that unrelated friends would put up a joint contract in the 1650s, money is too scarce.

[494] Dame Mary seems to have been independently wealthy from her first marriage. See pages 427-428, A. Mackay, *The Book Of Mackay*. And see page 124 for her marriage and which records John and Kathrine Gunn as her children.

[495] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Hector_Munro,_1st_Baronet accessed 13 December. The date is also that which is commonly given elsewhere for example 'Hector Monro of Fowlis …died in Hamburgh in Aprile 1635' page 40, *Publications of the Scottish History Society Volume 33*.

[496] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Hector_Munro,_1st_Baronet accessed 20 March 2018. See also https://archive.org/stream/historyofmunroso00mack/historyofmunroso00mack_djvu.txt accessed 20 March 2018.

[497] See National Records of Scotland GD84/1/27/7 for detail. People sometimes have him alive later; that is because they are confused with his son Alexander (9).

[498] NRS GD84/1/27/3 see http://catalogue.nrscotland.gov.uk/nrsonlinecatalogue/overview.aspx?st=1&tc=y&tl=n&tn=n&tp=n&k=alexander+Gunn&ko=a&r=&ro=s&df=1650&dt=1700&di=y

The children of Alexander 'Killernan / Navidale' Gunn (8,9) were

9.13. **CHIEF** JOHN 'KILLERNAN / NAVIDALE' GUNN who was born about 1636 (born no earlier than 1636). He married KATHERINE (CHRISTINA) SINCLAIR. She was born about 1640.

9.14. CATHERINE GUNN who was born about 1637. She married ANGUS MACKAY OF MELNESS (Lt.Col.) on 1 or 8 May 1658 (dates mentioned in NRS GD 84/1/27/7). He was born about 1630. He died about 1702. ANGUS MACKAY was the son of Donald 1st Lord Reay, who was the brother of Catherine's mother and so Angus was her first cousin.

9 ALEXANDER GUNN was born about 1638. He married CHRISTINA / CHRISTIANA MACKAY before 1668. CHRISTINA was a sister of the preceding Angus Mackay and so two Gunn siblings married two Mackay (half) siblings[499] who were their first cousins. Alexander and Christiana probably lived at Navidale. She was born about 1645. No further information is known.

9.15. **CHIEF** DONALD CROTACH GUNN was born no later than 1647. He died before 1709. (Sutherland Estate documents.) He married MARGARET SUTHERLAND daughter of Captain Sutherland of Torbal. See Part Three.

9.13 CHIEF JOHN 'KILLERNAN / NAVIDALE' GUNN (Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1636 (born no earlier than 1636). He married KATHERINE (CHRISTINA) SINCLAIR. She was born about 1640.

The first son of Chief Alexander (8,9) was Chief John Gunn (9,13) who progressively bankrupted Killernan and Navidale. More Sutherland Estate documents are around for Navidale than Killernan in his time; did he live more at Navidale on the coast rather than the harsher inland which might be left to a younger generation? John's (9,13) mother's first husband died in 1635, so John (9,13) had to be born no earlier than about 1636. He is barely – and confusingly - mentioned in the mythic history.

He is mentioned as cautioner and heir apparent to Killernan in a copy of a marriage document[500] of September 1652; his father Alexander was alive at that date as John was only 'heir apparent'. Scottish law did allow for under twenty-one year olds to be part of legal contracts.[501]

The National Records of Scotland has a May 1658 record[502] registered 15 May 1676 for John Gunn of Killernan.[503] His sister Catherine (9,14) is also mentioned, as are their parents Alexander Gunn (8,9) and Dame Mary Mackay Lady Foulis (Fowlis) who are both specifically noted as dead so John was

[499] Pages 142-143, A. Mackay, *The Book of Mackay* records that Angus was the fourth child from the first marriage and Christian was the fifth child of the third marriage, being the twelfth child in total.
[500] Caithness County Archives, Wick library, Gunn Mss pages 1-3, retold on page 168 Mark Rugg Gunn, *The Gunns*.
[501] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Legal_Capacity_(Scotland)_Act_1991 accessed 24 April 2018.
[502] See NRS GD84/1/27/7 for detail.
http://catalogue.nrscotland.gov.uk/nrsonlinecatalogue/overview.aspx?st=2&tc=y&tl=n&tn=n&tp=n&k=&ko=a&r=GD84%2f1%2f27%2f7+&ro=s&df=&dt=&di=y&dc=&dco=s&t=&to=o& accessed 19 March 2018.
[503] See NRS GD84/1/27/7 for detail.

head of the Killernan Gunns – Clan Gunn Chief. Given John is 'of Killernan' in the document it is probable he was over twenty-one years of age but he may have been younger.[504] It is possible he was senior to his sister but that is an assumption.[505] So, John was certainly Clan Gunn Chief on 1 / 8 May 1658. His father Chief Alexander was dead by 27 January 1658 as was discussed in his biography. This means John was, by implication, Chief of the Clan from at least January 1658 to around 1679 when he (and his family) drops out of history.

By implication of John (9,13) being head of the family, all children were from Alexander's (8,9) marriage[506] to Dame Mary Mackay Lady Fowlis or otherwise John (9,13) would not have been head of the family. There is a story[507] that this marriage was the second for Alexander; the National Record of Scotland document clearly shows that if such was the case no male child survived from that first marriage as such a male child would have been the head of the Killernan Gunns, not John (9,13). The lack of any documentary support for an earlier marriage also makes it a questionable event.

A 26 April 1670 document[508] notes that this John Gunn (9,13) was Alexander Gunn's heir (8,9) and that the lands held by John (9,13) included Killernan, Navidale and 'Balnavaliache'.

Marriage Catherine Sinclair married John Gunn (9,13) who was born no earlier than 1636.

Mark Rugg Gunn has the earlier John Gunn (8,10) - the never 'of' Killernan but 'in' Navidale and of Borrobol –marrying this Catherine[509] only daughter of Francis Sinclair, fiar of Dun and his wife Jean, daughter of John Sinclair of Ulbster. That's an error. Consider an approximate marriage year for Catherine. Her grandfather David Sinclair first married in 1606.[510] This suggests a birth year for her father, who was the eldest child, of no earlier than the mid-1620s. In consequence Catherine must have been born no earlier than the mid-1640s or so with a marriage in the mid-1660s. The date is supported by her uncle William Sinclair - who was immediately younger than her father - who married in 1643.[511] As already mentioned John Gunn (8,10) 'in' Navidale, of Borrobol and never of Killernan was born around 1590/1600 so Catherine most likely did not marry him as this would mean an about forty-five year age gap between them which seems highly unlikely. One can imagine, over the years, confusion as to which John Gunn married whom, when…

According to D. M. Rose this John Gunn (9,13) was much involved in debt in spite of his wife bringing him 4,000 merks.[512] Catherine was an only child so a reasonable dowry seems quite possible. By 1679 John was owing,[513] amongst much else, two thousand Scottish merks to his first cousin[514] George Gunn

[504] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Legal_Capacity_(Scotland)_Act_1991 accessed 6 August 2019.
[505] They could be twins, but there is no mention of that in any history of which I am aware.
[506] See NRS GD84/1/27/7 for detail.
[507] Pages 166 and 168, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* for example.
[508] Page 91, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[509] The 1896 tree records her name as Christina, other records give her as Katherine.
[510] See http://www.fionamsinclair.co.uk/genealogy/caithness/Dun.htm accessed 27 February 2018.
[511] See http://www.fionamsinclair.co.uk/genealogy/caithness/Dun.htm accessed 27 February 2018.
[512] Page 167, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[513] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html for detail. Other debts included about £750 to the brother of Lord Duffus, and 500 merks to John Sutherland.

of Borrobol (9,16). Specified debts (including George Gunn's (9,16) of Borrobol) of John's (9,13) at this time were two thousand five hundred merks and £750 which make an approximate total owed of £2400 scots. That's a lot of money. Remember that the Navidale wadset was acquired for £800 in 1636, so John owed the equivalent of three Navidale Estates. As well, there was *'total failure of the crops'*[515] in 1679 and the estate had poor crops at other times. The Killernan Estate was, to say the least, not a successful business at this time for a variety of reasons.

Sutherland Estate legal documents[516] clearly show that John had an 'eldest' son Alexander (10) with an obvious implication that at least two more sons (10) existed. But nothing more has been found about these children. A 1679 document noted *'John Gunn* (9,13) *for himself, Alexander Gunn* (8,9) *of Navidaill his father* (the document implies Alexander Gunn (8,9) was still living and)… *William Gunn* (7,8) *his grandf*(athe)*r'* showing the link back to William Beag (7,8) – note the William (7,8) is not 'of' a place which is a point already discussed. This is the last we hear of John Gunn (9,13).

In the copy of the already mentioned 1652 marriage document – and we do not know when the copy was made, the clarity of the handwriting suggest Victorian times, possibly 1881 based on another document from the archive – it is stated that he and his brother Alexander (9) were killed at Tacher 'being in there way from Killernan to pay a visit to the Earl there grandfather.' That's accurate – they were both grandchildren of the Earl. It had to be late in life - both had married and John had at least one child, probably three. It probably happened no early than 1670 – see (9) Alexander's life.

When did the MacHamish Gunns lose Killernan? It has to be in the period 1679 – 1704. John (9,13) was still of Killernan in 1679 but his youngest and presumably only surviving brother Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) is of Badanloch by 1704. John's son Alexander (10) (and his other two sons (10)) disappear from history after the 1679 document.

The Gunns continued to own Borrobol – some Borrobol Gunns defined with links to the Clan Gunn Chiefs, emigrated to the Red River Colony around 1811. The description implies they left no-one behind.

John 'Killernan' Gunn and Katherine (Christina) Sinclair had the following children:

i ALEXANDER[10] GUNN was born about 1658.
ii UNKNOWN MALE 1[10] GUNN was born about 1660.
iii UNKNOWN MALE 2[10] GUNN was born about 1662.

[514] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 15 March says John Gunn (9,13) and George Gunn (9,16) were brothers german – full brothers. This is an error – they were first cousins.
[515] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html for detail.
[516] Sutherland Estate documents deposit 33, numbers 276 and 277 at the National Library of Scotland.

10. ALEXANDER GUNN AND BROTHERS

Alexander (10) and his brothers were sons of John Gunn of Killernan and Navidale (9,13).

A Sutherland Estate 1679 document[517] says - *'Alexander Gunn of Killernan oldest lawfull son to the said John Gunn of Navidaill'*. This document is from the Lords of Council in Edinburgh and this mention of *'oldest lawfull son'* also appears in a further document. So we now have children for John Gunn (9,13) – an Alexander (10) who was the oldest son and was 'of Killernan' in 1679 and another two sons at least (by the implication of *'oldest lawfull son'*). It's quite reasonable - John Gunn of Killernan and Navidale (9,13) was born say 1636, and could have had children by 1657 or so. The children would be adults by 1679. The legal age of capacity – the ability to make a contract - in Scotland for a male was from 14 years old.[518] But note Alexander's (10) father John (9,13) lived at Navidale; Alexander was at Killernan. Was Navidale the working home of the senior MacHamish and Killernan a secondary property, or was Navidale a retirement home?

What happened to Alexander (10) and Unknown (10) brothers? Are these the Gunns who were killed in various, vague Gunn stories?[519] It's possible as these MacHamish Gunns disappear. Mind you, they could just have died from any manner of causes. Alternatively, the three Gunns may have disappeared from the history books because, as already discussed, John Gunn (9,13) may have lost Killernan as he ran out of money, and his family faded out of history.

Did Alexander (9) c. 1638 - being the second son of Alexander (8,9) and as such uncle to Alexander (10) – and so the younger brother of John Gunn of Killernan and Navidale (9,13) having married well - take over Killernan? It's possible. That idea is more fully explored in his life.

9.14 CATHERINE GUNN (Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1637. She married ANGUS MACKAY OF MELNESS on 1 or 8 May 1658[520]. He was born about 1630. He died about 1702.

Catherine[521] (9,14) was a daughter of Alexander (8,9).[522] Her mother's first husband died in 1635, so she has to be born no earlier than 1636. It is not clear whether her brother John (9,13) or Catherine (9,14) was the elder child.

She married, aged around twenty, no later than 16 February 1656[523] (the 'marriage contract' was registered 1 or 8 May 1658[524]) her cousin Angus / Aeneas who was the second son of the first Lord

[517] NLS Sutherland Estate documents deposit 313, numbers 276 and 277.
[518] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Legal_Capacity_(Scotland)_Act_1991 accessed 8 August 2019, but I am not clear as to the full legal position at this time.
[519] Page 168, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* being one example.
[520] Date mentioned in NRS GD 84/1/27/7.
[521] Page 168, Angus Mackay, *The Book of Mackay.*
[522] Page 143, Angus Mackay, *ibid.* and NRS GD84/1/27/3.

Reay. Angus / Aeneas was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the service of Denmark. Aeneas started 'The Melness Branch of Mackays'; Catherine was his second wife. Her brother was Alexander Gunn who married Christina / Christiana Mackay who was half-sister to Angus Mackay, Catherine's husband. Chief Donald Crotach Gunn was the youngest sibling. There are quite a few National Records of Scotland documents concerning assorted land 'owned' by them from John Lord Reay.[525] The MacKay / Gunn links are complex around this time.

Catherine Gunn had six children with many descendants whose lives are not followed as they are too far away from the surname Gunn. The first generation was

1. Christina Mackay
2. John Mackay
3. Alexander Mackay
4. Donald Mackay
5. Angus Mackay
6. William Mackay

The belief shown on pages 166-167 of Mark Rugg Gunn's *Clan Gunn* and elsewhere that William Mhor (8) fathered a John who fathered an Alexander who fathered Catherine (9,14) is not sustainable for many reasons. A key problem are the years between Catherine (9,14) and William Mhor (8). William Mhor (8) was born around 1595, see his life. His supposed son John could not be born any earlier than say 1615. John's supposed son Alexander could not be born any earlier than 1635. And Alexander supposedly had Catherine (9,14). But Catherine (9,14) had to be born no later than about 1640 because she married Lieutenant Colonel Mackay with contract of marriage 1 May 1658 (1656?) so that would have her marrying at eighteen. So, Catherine is born if you accept the Mark Rugg Gunn position when her supposed father was no more than five years old which is obviously wrong.

9. ALEXANDER GUNN

Alexander was born c 1638. He married Christina Mackay but they died without issue.

This Alexander (9) was not Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Badanloch and later of Wester Helmsdale (10,19) with whom his story is often confused; that Alexander was his nephew. Nor should he be confused with his father who was also Alexander (8,9) being the one who married Mary Christiane (Dame) (Lady Fowlis).

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[523] NRS GD84/1/21/4B at http://catalogue.nrscotland.gov.uk/nrsonlinecatalogue/overview.aspx?st=1&tc=y&tl=n&tn=n&tp=n&k=gun&ko=a&r=&ro=s&df=1650&dt=1700&di=y accessed 7 July 2018.
[524] See NRS GD84/1/27/7 for detail.
[525] For example, GD84/1/27/8, GD84/1/27/3, GD84/1/27/2B and GD84/1/21/4B.

This Alexander (9) was born c. 1638, he married[526] Christina / Christiana Mackay (b circa 1645[527]) by 1668. Christina / Christiana was half-sister to Angus Mackay who married Alexxander's sister Catherine. *The Book of Mackay*[528] records Alexander as *'chieftain of the Machamish Gunns'* but does not attach 'of Killernan' to his name. This suggests Alexander (9) was the main MacHamish at one point but that Killernan was not in Gunn hands in his lifetime – by implication his younger brother Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) was never of Killernan. Given Alexander's (9) brother John (9,13) was alive in 1679 presumably Alexander must have been the senior MacHamish in or after that year, if the *Book of Mackay* is accurate. And that text also records Alexander (9) *'had issue'*.

Now generations of Alexanders can confuse. The father of this Alexander (9) was Alexander (8,9), and Alexander (8,9) was dead by 26 April 1670[529] - and Alexander's (9) elder brother John Gunn (9,13) was heir of Alexander Gunn (8,9) on that date. The lands held by John Gunn (9,13) included Killernan, Navidale and 'Balnavaliache'. In other words, in April 1670 Alexander (9) was not the senior MacHamish and nor did he have the main Estates, his elder brother John did.

But this seems to contradict the well-known February 1668 document, detailed in Thomas Sinclair[530] and elsewhere. It is a document aimed at passing over the lands of Navidale and Easter Balnavaliach from Alexander Gunn to his wife Christiana MacKay *'for all the days of her life'*. It also described Alexander Gunn as being *'of Killernan'*. This would mean Alexander ought to have been the senior MacHamish. But this *'of Killernan'* and the ability to pass over Navidale and 'Balnavaliach' should not be treated as fact as there is a major issue; the original copy I have seen is not signed and the National Records of Scotland record that copy.[531] Smibert points out the document is *'not registered'*.[532] In other words what we have is a draft document. People have treated it as a final – legally bindable - copy which it was not. And the draft was not finalised as shown by the 1670 document mentioned in the preceding paragraph. So what was the purpose of the 1668 draft? I suspect it was part of a proposal to buy out the, in effect, bankrupt John (9,13). This goes well with the idea that John Gunn was severely in debt (and with legal issues) and that Alexander (9) married well; MacKay money[533] may have been at the back of the 1668 document.

The 1668 document[534] mentioned Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) as being 'in' Killernan and that he was 'bailie', a legal position. Donald (9,15) is not mentioned as 'heir apparent' to – or 'of - Killernan; this reflected the Killernan ownership of the time with Alexander (10) and his brothers (10) being the sons

[526] Page 158, Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* says Henderson recorded them marrying in 1650; this is obviously wrong. There is an attempt to argue by some that Alexander was first married to Catherine Sinclair with assorted descendants. The dates and titles don't work; the marriage is too early (1641) and none of the children are 'of Killernan' or 'Navidale' which they would be if they were the most senior children. Rather the most senior child is of Achintoul, but other places like Knockfinn and Dalnaglaton occur. These descendants are in the 1896 tree down as descending from George Gunn of Borrobol. My suspicion is that in the past Achintoul was misread from Borrobol, or mistranscribed. Achentoul is also linked to Donald the Scholar Gunn, see his life.
[527] Pages 142-143, A. Mackay, *The Book of Mackay* has her father the 1st Lord Reay marrying three times. Christina is the last child of the third wife. The second wife died in 1637. The third wife had five children.
[528] Page 143, A. Mackay, *ibid.*
[529] Page 91, Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*.
[530] Pages 156-158, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns* and the Gunn papers at the Wick archives, Scotland.
[531] NRS GD139/26.
[532] Page 156, Thomas Smibert, *The Clans of the Highlands of Scotland*.
[533] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html *'Alexander... The provision he made on his marriage saved the situation'* accessed 7 August 2019.
[534] Pages 156-157, Thomas Smibert, *The Clans of the Highlands of Scotland* has the document passing over the lands of Navidale and Easter Balnavaliach from Alexander Gunn to his wife Christiana MacKay.

of the senior MacHamish (John 9,13) and therefore the heirs. And of course, there was also Donald's (9,15) older brother – this Alexander (9).

As already mentioned, the *Book of Mackay* does not record 'of Killernan' against this Alexander (9), only the 1668 document already discussed suggested the plan was for this Alexander (9) to have Killernan. Was Alexander (9) ever of Killernan? I have not seen any documents of the time to confirm or deny that he was. One must consider whether the Killernan estate would have been in good condition in this Alexander's (9) time given the debts of John (9,13) and perhaps his son (10); one suspects it was not. Especially as, in at least one view, this Alexander (9) *'maintained great state ...* (and) *seldom moved without a great 'tail''*[535] - did MacKay money help pay for the extravagance as well as - perhaps – Killernan? There is a questionable story about a fire burning the charters of Killernan and Navidale, one view is that it was in Alexander's (9) time[536] others suggest Donald Crotach's (9,15) time.[537] I discuss the incident in Donald Crotach's life (9,15) where I think it more likely happened, if it happened at all.

When did Alexander die? When did his wife die? There does not seem to have been any surviving children as the next known Gunn MacHamish landholder is Alexander's younger brother Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15).

Alexander probably died at Tacher with his brother Chief John (9.13) after 1670 – see Chief John's life.

9.15 CHIEF DONALD CROTACH GUNN, *the ongoing, traditional Chief line. See PART THREE.*

[535] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 1 March 2018.
[536] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 3 March 2018.
[537] Pages 140-141 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*

PART THREE - 9.15 Chief Donald Crotach Gunn and the ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN GUNNS OF PART THREE:

9.15 **Chief** Donald Crotach Gunn c. 1647 – 1708. Married. He had –
10.19 **Chief** Alexander of Badanloch later Wester Helmsdale Gunn, c. 1681 – 1763. He had -
11 **Chief** William Gunn circa 1755 - 10 September 1780 in India. Dwi.
11 Morrison Gunn[11] c. 1760 - . Not Chief. Dwi.
10.20 George 'Corrish' Gunn c. 1682. Descendants, both dwi.
10.21 Esther Gunn c. 1685. Married Donald Mackay of Skerray. Descendants. *Not Gunns.*
10.22 William (Lt. Col.) Gunn c. 1686. Married. Descendants. *Not Gunns and Dutch.*
10.23 Margaret Gunn. Married (10.24) John Gunn. Descendants, still with the continuously held surname Gunn and therefore the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. This line is explored in Parts Four A and Four B.

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9.15 CHIEF DONALD CROTACH GUNN

Chief Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) was the final son of Chief Alexander Gunn (8,9). Chief Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) was born no later than about 1647 when his mother was around forty-seven. He died by 1708.[538]

Donald Crotach's (9,15) years have been given as 1650-1723[539] and other dates are given including c. 1665-1709.[540] Given Donald's parents are on record as being dead by 1658[541] Given a National Record of Scotland document records Donald was dead by 1708, these other dates are wrong.

Donald's mother first married in July 1619, let us assume she was born around 1600. She married her second husband Chief Alexander Gunn (8,9) no earlier than April 1635 and probably a bit later as that was the month and year her first husband died. Given the approximate birth year of 1600 for his mother then Donald being born as late as 1650 is unlikely, although possible. Birth defects tend to increase with the age of the mother[542] and this might be linked to Donald being a hunchback, a 'crotach.' His mother's age also adds to the near certainty that Donald was the last born as even today a post fifty year old mother is a rarity. Given the 1668 document discussed in the previous Alexander's (9) life it is possible that Donald (9,15) could have been born a little earlier than 1650 as it might be easier to act as a bailie if he was twenty-one. This puts Donald's (9,15) birth year as no later than around 1647.

[538] National Records of Scotland CS229/G/2/58.
[539] Page 166, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[540] *Burke's Peerage*
[541] See NRS GD84/1/27/7 for detail. People sometimes have him alive later; that is because of confusion with his son Alexander (10,19).
[542] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advanced_maternal_age accessed 5 June 2018.

Donald's (9,15) oldest brother Chief John (9,13) was born in 1636 or so, as was his sister Catherine / Katherine (9,14). Chief John (9,13) and Catherine / Katherine (9,14) cannot be born earlier than about nine months after April 1635 due to their mother's previous marriage and they cannot be born much later as the 1658 document[543] already mentioned has them as adults. The next brother of Donald's was Alexander (9) who married Christina Mackay. It is reasonable to assume more siblings existed who did not make it to adulthood were born to Chief Donald's (9,15) father Chief Alexander (8,9) as between John (9,13) and Donald (9,15) – the oldest and youngest children - there is a roughly eleven-year gap but only four known children.

Donald was 'in' Killernan by 1668 but was 'of' Badanloch by at least 1704. This means sometime in the 1679[544]-1704 period Killernan and Navidale left MacHamish Gunn control and Donald went to Badanloch.

Donald (9,15) was *'of Badinloch'*[545] by August 1704 as he was recorded *'For the Shire of Sutherland'*[546] as a *'Commissioner of Supply.'*[547] Basically the Commissioners were tax raisers with some local government functions. It's a position of social standing; there were thirty Commissioners for Sutherland including the Earl of Sutherland and Lord Strathnaver.

Badanloch was a tack.[548] Donald is recorded as the 1708 'deceased Donald Gunn Tacksman of Badenloch[549]'There are records in the Sutherland Estate papers detailing cows received by the Sutherland Estate from Alexander Gunn of Badanloch (10,19), being the eldest son of Donald Crotach (9,15), as payments for the Estate. The earliest of these receipts is dated 1709; Donald was obviously dead as Alexander was recorded as 'of' Badanloch.

There is a very questionable story[550] about how Donald (9,15) – or it might have been in his brother Alexander's (9) time – nearly lost Killernan. The Killernan House was supposedly burnt and suspicions were that some sort of plot to eject the Gunns was underway 'encouraged' by the Earl of Sutherland.[551] The ownership papers were 'lost' in the fire. All this seems highly problematic. As one view said *'All such stories are extremely plausible until properly investigated, but so far as regards 'record proof' these circumstantial tales must be treated as suspect. ... The relative papers show that it is very doubtful if there was any ejection at all as the parties came to terms.'*[552] One view has that the

[543] See chapter 9.1.
[544] See John Gunn's (9,13) biography.
[545] In modern documents often spelt Badanloch, such as on OS maps.
[546] http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=u8ArAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA677&dq=gunn+sutherland&hl=en&sa=X&ei=DRK7Utm5EK3H7AbKqoC4DQ&ved=0CDYQ6AEwATgo#v=snippet&q=gunn&f=false accessed 23 March 2018.
[547] *Anne: Translation; 1704, 6 July, Edinburgh, Parliament; Parliamentary Register; Saturday 5 August 1704; Legislation; Act anent supply; 1704 / 7 /69.* He was not a commissioner in 1685. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=u8ArAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA23&lpg=PA23&dq=1685+++sutherland+commissioner++supply&source=bl&ots=st71xquWDi&sig=tM60hmLXlOeuBWAsyZ3tpwW2-NI&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjC2fnt4trZAhXSFsAKHahyBEcQ6AEISDAI#v=onepage&q=1685%20%20%20sutherland%20commissioner%20%20supply&f=false accessed 7 March 2019.
[548] See discussion on his son Alexander (10,19).
[549] National Records of Scotland CS229/G/2/58.
[550] Pages 139-140, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[551] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 1 March 2018.
[552] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 1 March 2018.

event occurred in 1690[553] and Donald was 'Chief' and at Killernan. It is the lack of specificity to the event which makes the event highly questionable – and saying Donald was 'Chief' (which he never was in his time, as said, Clan Gunn Chiefs were invented in the 1800s and 'awarded' backwards from that time) adds to the questionability. Supposedly once the fire was over Gordon of Kilgour[554] tried to get the lease of the lands of Killernan.

I have trouble accepting the idea that the Earl of Sutherland tried to get the Gunns removed from Killernan in this underhand way. Why would he bother? He was wealthy and powerful so he could just put pressure on the Gunns to go if he had wanted Killernan for some obscure reason, so he wouldn't need to illegally burn the Gunn House. It is also worth noting the Earl has no record of behaving in illegal ways. As well, there is more than one copy of a wadset – the Sutherland Estate would have held a copy and their archives in the National Library of Scotland make clear the wadsets were all fully witnessed and according to law, not a scrap of paper for the Earl to ignore.

Overall, this fire story seems very unlikely; it screams a modern 'alternative fact' as to why the Gunns left Killernan. To say the Gunns left Killernan because they were basically bankrupt does not match the romantic tinge beloved by the myth believers.

But after the Gunns left Killernan certainly Donald Crotach (9,15) went to Badanloch before 1704. It is further inland – one heads to it from Helmsdale on the coast (close to Helmsdale is Navidale) then up the Strath of Kildonan to Badanloch in the middle of Sutherland. Badanloch is much closer to the other Gunn Estates of Borrobol, Kinbrace and Achentoul. In the early 1700s Badanloch would have been a desolate spot. Its desolation suggests that it was a less appealing – and presumably less expensive – property than Killernan which is comparatively near the coast. It is quite plausible to argue that the Gunns left Killernan because they were economically embarrassed but the bonus of the was that it change enabled them to go closer to their extended family.

The 1709 – 1714 receipts seen for Badanloch show that Alexander (his father Donald Crotach having died) was paying the *'entry bond'* for Badanloch by a mix of cash and cows over a period of time. He presumably would have paid just cash if he had the money. This proves that money was bit in short supply and that Donald was dead by 1709, if not earlier.

There is a story that Donald Gunn (9,15) brought his men out in the 1715 Jacobite uprising.[555] As mentioned there are documents in the National Library of Scotland which clearly show he was dead by 1709 so participating in the 1715 uprising is obviously absurd. And there are further documents for 1710, 1713 and 1714 all with his son Alexander (10,19) being 'of' Badanloch so that laos supports that Donald (9,15) was definitely dead before the 1715 uprising. There is also no historic record of the Gunns being involved in the 1715 uprising[556] although an occasional, random Gunn might have been involved. And there are other problems with the idea. The Jacobite rebellions were, in general terms, a

[553] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 6 March 2018; page 148. Thomas Smibert, *The Clans of the Highlands of Scotland.*
[554] Gordons of Kilgour in this mid-late1600s time are very hard to find.
[555] Page 169 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn.*
[556] See Appendix, page 64. Chantel Duijvesteijn, *The Highland Clans and the '45 Uprising* being a Master's Thesis for the University of Utrecht, 2009.

Catholic rebellion but the Highlands were Protestant.[557] Gunn involvement on the losing Catholic side would have meant, at the very least, removal from the Sutherland Estates. Gunn involvement on the Jacobite side in the 1745 rebellion is also not on the historic record; there is, though, record of some Gunns turning out on the Government side in 1745, Donald's son Chief Alexander (10,19) was one example.

Donald (9,15) married Margaret a daughter[558] of Captain (Major?) John Sutherland of Torboll.

Donald Crotach was born about 1647 – to start having children when he was twenty-four is not unreasonable. A birth date of around 1681 is fair for his eldest son Alexander (10,19) (given the 1896 tree and that Alexander was responsible for Badanloch by 1709). Donald (9,15) and his wife had five children (at least). I suspect more. The birth dates of the children are not accurately known nor – bar for Alexander of Badanloch (10,19) - do we know with certainty the sequence of the children.

Donald Crotach Gunn and Margaret Sutherland had the following known children:

10.19 **CHIEF** ALEXANDER OF BADANLOCH LATER OF WESTER HELMSDALE GUNN was born about 1681. He died in 1763.[559]

10.20 GEORGE 'CORRISH' GUNN was born about 1682.

10.21 ESTHER GUNN was born about 1685. She married DONALD MACKAY OF SKERRAY. Sinclair suggests Esther (10,21)[560] was the elder daughter. She had her first child Hector by 1725-1730.

10.22 WILLIAM (LT.COL.) GUNN was born about 1686. He married ANN ROSS in 1728. She was born in Scotland.

10.23 MARGARET GUNN. She married (10.24) JOHN 'BORROBOL, KINBRACE FARM, RUMSDALE, GRIMACHARY' GUNN. I suspect Margaret (10,23) was the last, but second known, girl as traditionally it was the third daughter who was named after the mother.[561] (Given only two daughters are known this suggests one other may have died in infancy.) *This is the ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line.*

[557] See, for example, M. G. H. Pittock *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans; The Jacobite army in 1745.*

[558] From the1896 tree.

[559] See https://www.geni.com/people/Margaret-Sutherland/6000000071975057757 accessed 2 February 2024 gives 1688 as the date of marriage. I have not seen the cited document – I suspect it is a misreading of 1683. The document which gives 1683 I have seen. See page 163, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns* and the 1896 tree. Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*, page 195 retells a birth date for Chief Alexander of 1705. That's impossible, as Alexander is definitely running Badanloch by 1709 – see his biography.

[560] From page 149, Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* - '(Donald Crotach's) *eldest daughter Esther married Donald Mackay of Skerray, and was alive in 1723, while the other became Mrs John Gunn of Kinbrace.*' This is from discussion of Aeneas Gunn's Appendix in that text.

[561] https://scottishkin.com/the-traditional-scottish-naming-system accessed 15 May 2019.

10.19 CHIEF ALEXANDER GUNN OF BADANLOCH 1683 -1763

No document of the time uses 'Chief' when referring to Alexander Gunn of Badanloch. 'Chief' was awarded retrospectively to people like Alexander once the Court of Session made its judgement for Chief Hector Gunn who died in 1803.

Part 1 – Life

Chief Alexander Gunn was born in 1683[562] and probably died in 1763.[563] He used the surname Gun.[564] He was wealthy through a mixture of inheritance and questionable activities but this wealth was used up over time. At his death his family was left with little.

Chief Alexander's (10,19[565]) father Chief Donald Crotach (9,15) was born no later than 1657 as his parents Chief Alexander 'Killernan' Gunn (8,9) and Mary Mackay (more accurately (Dame) (Lady Fowlis) Mackay) are recorded as dead by January 1658.[566] Chief Donald was probably born significantly before 1657 as his mother Mary Mackay was born around 1600 as she married her first husband Sir Hector Munro 1st Baronet of Foulis in July 1619,[567] he died in April 1635. Given Mary Mackay's birth year of around 1600 a birth year in the 1650s for Chief Donald Crotach is unlikely. A birth year of around the mid-1640s seems more probable given Chief Donald had three known elder siblings.

Chief Alexander (10,19) was the eldest son of Chief Donald Crotach and Mary Mackay as shown by him being 'of Badanloch' following his father's death in 1708.[568] He was later 'of Wester Helmsdale.' He held the wadset of both properties for a while but various documents show he lived first at Badanloch then Wester Helmsdale.

The other children of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn and Mary Mackay were, in probable order, -

- George 'Corrish' Gunn. His children died without issue.
- Esther Gunn. Born 1685.[569] She married Donald Mackay of Skerray. Descendants, not Gunns.

[562] The 1896 Clan Gunn Tree. Another view is that he was born in 1692 see http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html but given Chief Donald Crotach's birth year of around 1647, 1692 seems late for a first child.
[563] Pages 163 and 195, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*, the 1896 Clan Gunn Tree and http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-1531911.html.
[564] Alexander used 'Gun' when signing his name; this is shown in assorted National Library of Scotland and National Records of Scotland documents. He was certainly literate and wrote many letters on legal matters. The book *The Highlands of Scotland in 1750* also uses Gun when referring to him
[565] Meaning generation 10 from Coroner Gunn who was generation 1, number 19 meaning the seniority from the Coroner. This system obviously applies to others in this essay.
[566] See National Records of Scotland GD84/1/27/7 for detail.
[567] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Hector_Munro,_1st_Baronet accessed 20 March 2018. See also https://archive.org/stream/historyofmunroso00mack/historyofmunroso00mack_djvu.txt accessed 20 March 2018.
[568] See National Records of Scotland GD84/1/27/7 for detail. National Records of Scotland CS226/3913 had Chief Donald definitely dead by 1708.
[569] National Records of Scotland document GB234, GD84/1/27/3B.

- William (Lt. Col.) Gunn. He transferred his loyalty to the Netherlands and served in the Dutch Army. Descendants, not Gunns.

- Margaret Gunn. She married John Gunn of Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale and Grimachary. The ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line.

First Marriage

Chief Alexander married Margaret (Mary) Mackay[570] from Kirtomy. She was born about 1690. She probably died 6 June 1746.[571]

(10,19) Chief Alexander's 1712[572] marriage contract mentioned the marriage would happen the following year, and it also referred to Chief Alexander Gunn of Badanloch later of Wester Helmsdale's grandfather[573] - also called Chief Alexander (8,9) - in the present tense but this grandfather was dead by about 1658. The only source for this contract comments 'It was evidently drawn up by Hector Munro of Naver, who was evidently a wag'[574] so we should perhaps not take it as a totally serious document. The contract also stated that £1000 Scots would be given by the wife's father to Mary and Alexander once Alexander had £2000 ready, to provide combined security for Alexander and Mary. This money was meant to be arranged by Michaelmas 1713. The bride's father only paid in 1719. Why?

The children[575] from this marriage, who all died without adult issue, were -

- Mary / Margaret (11) who married Major Hugh Mackay of Rearquhar Durness 28 July 1737. He was part of the Mackay family the Gunns married into in various generations. His family group was the 'Sandwood Mackays.' He was the 3rd son of the Hon. Charles Mackay being a son of Donald 1st Lord Reay. They had Elizabeth[576] (12) who died young.
- Elizabeth (11) 1713? / 1715? - 1722.
- John (11) b. 1719? died young.
- Alexander (possibly William?) (11) b.1722? died 1746 whilst a member of the Dutch army.[577]

[570] Margaret / Mary Mackay was a descendant from Iye Du Mackay as were Barbara Mackay who married Chief Alexander MacDavid Gunn (7,7), the already mentioned Mary (Dame) (Lady Fowlis) Mackay who married Chief Alexander 'Killernan' Gunn (8,9) and Lt Col. Angus Mackay who married Catherine Gunn (9,14). In other words, the Gunns and Mackays were closely intertwined for at least three generations and are easy to confuse.
[571] *Burke's Peerage.*
[572] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 22 March 2018. There are factual errors, for example the death date of Donald Crotach is wrong. He died before 1709 according to NLS documents, not 1722 as stated in this article.
[573] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 22 March 2018.
[574] https://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 22 April 2024.
[575] Dates and children from page 149 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*, and elsewhere.
[576] *The Book of Mackay*, page 329 and http://www.thepeerage.com/p42871.htm#i428709 accessed 6 August 2018.
[577] Mainly derived from page 170, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*, the 1896 Family tree and *Burke's Peerage*.

Legal issues

It is without doubt that Alexander was involved in many legal battles for many years but such legal disputes were not uncommon in the Caithness area at this time. A report[578] written in 1750 notes *'The* (Caithness) *Gentry are Strong and Well-bodied men, much given to Hospitality and Drinking. They are much given to quarrelling and Law Suits …* (Caithness was) *said to yield more Money to the Lawyers and Petty foggers, than any other Six Counties of Scotland.'*

1) Badanloch, the early years

There are receipts from Dunrobin Castle in the National Library of Scotland Sutherland Estate documents which clearly show that Alexander Gunn (10,19) was head of the family *'of Baddinloch.'* Various documents suggest that the Badanloch was a wadset but 'rent' was dealt with more in a tack way. The first known receipt for Badanloch shows the long-term nature of the entry bond needed for a tack and it also proves Chief Donald Crotach (9,15) was dead by very early 1709. Other receipts exist showing Alexander's payments for the rent / bond. Examples of these receipts are -

'Received from Alexr Gunn of Baddinloch an Receipt granted by us to him dated this ninth day of … January + nyne years (1709) *for the number of fiteen cows in part payment of an entry bond granted by the deceased Donald Gunn his father. And which receipt from the date forwd shall be allowed when counting For the bond … 5th day of January and twenty years.'*

Dunrobine (sic) *5 December 1710 'Received from Alexr Gunn of McHomash*[579] *the sum of fifteen pounds Scots and that in paymt of fiteen cows in payt of hundred cows due to us*

at Dunrobin 10 July 1713 Alexr Gunn of Badanloch paying Lord Strathanaver £240 Scots as the price of twenty cows which shall be allowed to acct. of his …

And 15 July 1714 *'And from Alexr Gunn in Badanloch assorted Bill of Ro. Grays … to the Laird of Skibo for fifty pounds … for cows…' (Dunrobin, Strathnaver)*

Clearly Chief Alexander is in charge of Badanloch by 1709 – he is paying the due 'entry bond' so his father Chief Donald Crotach Gunn died by that year. Thomas Sinclair however has *'Alexander Gunn of Wester Helmsdale was served heir to his father Donald Gunn in Badanloch in 1723'*[580] - this has caused confusion in Gunn histories as it has been taken that 1723 meant that Donald (9,15) died then.[581] That's wrong. As shown, a primary source document proves that Donald Gunn (9,15) died no later than 1709. What we have in 1723 was either a late legal tidy up or a transcription error. The source for Sinclair's statement is not given. His date, therefore, should be ignored.

Alexander, whilst living at Wester Helmsdale, sublet the tack of Badanloch (including tenant farmers) to his father-in-law, in September 1730[582] but it is unclear for how long that arrangement held.

[578] Page 7, Anonymous, *The Highlands of Scotland in 1750,* published 1895.
[579] 'MacHamish,' surely.
[580] Page 126, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[581] For example, Page 166, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*, has a chart which gives a death year for Donald of 1723.
[582] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-831911.html for evidence used in this paragraph.

Alexander (10,19) also built a house on the Badanloch estate which he claimed cost £50 but for which he only got £20 when the Estate reverted back to the Earl of Sutherland as that was its worth according to law**.** The house was at 'Ellick'; his father-in-law considered it a poor build. Alexander also sublet the pendicle of Badanloch called Badiclavan – and the subletting document was *'beautifully written by Lt. William Gunn'*– presumably his brother William (10,22) had elegant handwriting.[583]

2) WESTER HELMSDALE

So, Alexander was 'of Badanloch' by 1708 and paying rent money owed by cattle but ten years later he acquired the wadset of Wester Helmsdale on 31 October 1718[584] for 4000 merks – a bit over £2000[585] - from William, Lord Strathnaver. The key question is how did he so quickly earn that amount of money? I suspect Alexander (10,19) was an unpleasant, ruthless landlord and something of a shyster. These skills meant he made the money to wadset Wester Helmsdale by 1718.

Mark Rugg Gunn in his text says Alexander (10,19) was *'so distinguished in legal matters that he was regarded as infallible as he could hang men or drown women who were criminals.'*[586] There is no evidence to support this claim and the idea that a random person in the 1700s could arrange capital punishment lacks all support.[587]

There are stories that he (10,19) was extravagant[588] with a *'piper, band, armour-bearer, an armoury and the fiery cross.*[589] *When he built his new meal mill he put the whole machinery to work by whisky…'*. In other words, he lived in *'considerable style and pomp.'*[590] It is unclear as to how accurate these stories were but there may be something about Alexander's spendthrift tendencies behind them. A further indication of Alexander's character can be found in a 25 July 1728 Court of Session document[591] 'binding Alexr Gun of Wester Helmsdale (and) … his wife … tenants ... servants…' from causing 'trouble' to George Mackie, Merchant in Helmsdale. The legal document is serious - it has a penalty of 1,000 Scottish merks if they do cause 'trouble.' It is not known what the problem was about but the document is clear that it is Alexander and his supporters who are blamed. The implication is surely that Alexander had a 'temper.'

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[583] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-831911.html accessed 9 August 2019.
[584] http://clangunn.weebly.com/the-gunn-papers-the-northern-chronicle-22-21911.html accessed 22 March 2018 for the full document. Also, National Records of Scotland document CS 226/3913.
[585] See https://www.johngraycentre.org/about/archives/old-scottish-money-research-guide-7/
[586] Page 170. Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[587] See Rachel E Bennett's 'Capital Punishment and the Scottish Criminal Justice system' for details on the legal system involved with Scottish capital punishment following the 1704 Act of Union. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-62018-3_2 accessed 28 March 2018.
[588] Page 195, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[589] Being the origin of the Ku Klux Klan symbol. It is interesting that the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan at Stone Mountain in Georgia in 1915 is also the place for the main USA Highland Games; is white American interest in Scottish Highlands heritage little more than a (hidden) assertion of white, patriarchal strength? Stone Mountain is also the site of a huge memorial commemorating the Confederate leaders of the USA in its Civil War – the memorial is a 1.2 hectares sculpture on the side of the mountain. Given the Confederacy is most notably known for racism the sculpture further raises the issue of what motivates Scottish heritage / Clan societies in the USA. The Highland Games growth in the USA notably came into its own in the 1960s when Afro-Caribbean consciousness developed strength. At least one book notes 'The Klan is also increasingly obsessed by its 'Celtic' … Scottish roots.' Page 180 George Rouse *Curious Scotland Tales From a Hidden History.* Is Scottish heritage nothing more than a form of colonialism, that is, a view of the past which is based on myths to preserve a sense of personal superiority? Or, if you prefer, the interpellation of Gunn myths defines the believer…
[590] Page 171, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[591] National Records of Scotland CS173/55. CS 226/3913. These references give a group of documents with no further NRS way to identify single items.

3) The ending in 1738 dispute with Lord Strathnaver

Summary Major money issues involving many legal documents between the Earl of Sutherland and Alexander exist including a 29 April 1738 (probably – the year on the document is slightly unclear) summative invoice and document[592] which lists the debts owed by Alexander Gunn to Earl Sutherland from 1708 to December 1730 - a massive £4827/13/9d. These include debts for Badanloch up to December 1730 proving that technically he was still responsible for that Estate even though he was not living on it, as well as general Wester Helmsdale debts. But the amount does not include the buying of the Wester Helmsdale wadset as that was already done, as said, in 1718.

Alexander instantly paid the amount owed. The document clearly states the payment stopped various legal charges against Alexander – Alexander was not willingly paying his debts.

So, including the amount paid for Wester Helmsdale, Alexander paid the Earl of Sutherland nearly £7,000 at least for the years 1718 – 1730. The 1808 rent for the *complete* Sutherland Estate was £10,000 which shows the amount Alexander paid was huge. How much money did he have in reserve after paying this amount? What is his relationship with his landlord like given that none of this money seemed to have been willingly paid?

The ending in 1738 dispute, detail

Sutherland Estate papers in the National Library of Scotland show that by 1738 Alexander (10,19) was in a major legal battle with the Earl of Sutherland[593] as at least forty-six pages of claim, counter claims and evidence exist. The case involved legal arbiters, judicial review of the Badanloch rents, interviewing of Badanloch tenants, summons to appear in Edinburgh at the Lords of Council, accounts and much else. The dispute centred on Alexander's renegotiation of the Badanloch tack / wadset on 5 September 1720, importantly when the Earl of Sutherland was underage and when people with knowledge were not there to help the Earl. In other words, Alexander (10,19) seems to have got Badanloch at markedly under the correct market rate from an underage Earl.

The key points from the documents[594] are

- Badanloch in Alexander's father's (9,15) time had great tenants. Alexander Gunn (10,19) overstocked Badanloch and so lost much cattle. Some of Alexander Gunn's (10,19) new tenants were of doubtful character one '*fled from Caithness for theft and another that pitted a great number of standing trees in the Bounds of Badanloch and sent them back to Caithness and when the thing was known he fled to Caithness...'*. And as to Alexander's (10,19) wadset of Wester Helmsdale (Alexander bought the wadset in 1718) *'it was on good tenantry at his entry but now it is almost all gone to ruin by both for want of Tennants and Biggings*(?) *The change house on said Tack is as publick as any in the country and commodious for travellers but the Doors are shut up with stones rendering it almost*

[592] National Records of Scotland CS138/5066.
[593] William Sutherland, 17th Earl of Sutherland 1708-1750.
[594] Sutherland Estate papers, National Library of Scotland, Deposit 313, 298 (bundle 24) and 309 (bundle 35).

ruinous. There is hardly Barns to thresh the corn in and notwithstanding of this he is gifting away the Timber to others...'

- Badanloch was renewed as a tack (wadset and tack seem interchangeable in many of the documents) in 1720 for twenty-five years for £100 (and £20 for converted customs) per year but tenants rent on Badanloch was £651 per annum. The Earl requested the legal arbiters that the extra rent so gained from 1729 onwards – namely £450 yearly – be paid to the Earl for the length of lease. It seems that one should pay rent to the owner of property to match the money coming in from tenants. That was fifteen years at £450 Scots which makes £6750 Scots. A phenomenal amount if the lease had continued until 1745 which it did not.

- Alexander Gunn (10,19) did not make the improvements he said he made on Badanloch; it seems that such improvements could be deducted from the amount owed to the owner of the Estate.

- Alexander Gunn (10,19) did not provide some crop which was part of his obligations to the Earl.

- There is a major set of documents examining the sub-tenants of the greater Badanloch estate. It consisted of about twenty-one tenants under oath detailing (and interrogated by *'Mr Gunn'* (10,19) and the Earl of Sutherland's legal people) land they rented from Alexander Gunn (10,19), how much they paid, *'services'* they did and whether they have *'written tack'* from Alexander Gunn (10,19) – and they did not have '*written tack'* so they had no security so could be thrown off their smallholdings at will. The documents point out *'Mr Gunn's'* (10,19) duties including those which he had not done. John McKay of Kirtomy – Alexander's father-in-law – paid Alexander Gunn (10,19) £195/6/8 Scots yearly for the *'Easter / Wester Baddinloch'* land and a further £22 for the lands of Baddachlavain and assorted other lesser lands. He provided support for how nice Alexander (10,19) was but the amount he paid was more than Alexander Gunn (10,19) was paying the Earl for all of the Badanloch Estate. (When his mother-in-law died in 1734 Alexander (10,19) claimed one third of her estate.[595]) And then Alexander (10,19) received money from the tenant farmers as well! Many tenants were against Alexander (10,19), including at least one turned off his tack.

Overall, the Sutherland Estate documents show there was not enough in Alexander Gunn's (10,19) receipts to believe the cost of running Badanloch and there were doubts over whether he made any of the claimed improvements on the estate except on his father-in-law's property. The documents also suggest the Earl was not fully informed of details which he should have had before Alexander (10,19) renewed Badanloch.

If you like, in modern terms, there was a strong suggestion that Alexander Gunn (10,19) used sharp practice to get his Estate at Badanloch at much less than the normal rate and that he then did not invest in Badanloch in any meaningful way when he said he had so done.

[595] Page 163, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

4)The 1736 – 1738 / 1739 (at least) battle

Problems for Alexander continued. It is unclear as to the core of the 1736 - to 1738/1739 problem was but it is, at least, another significant battle by Chief Alexander with his much more wealthy, powerful landlord Lord Strathnaver. It may be about renewal of a wadset.

There is a 16 June 1736 Copy of Summons for Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Wester Helmsdale to appear in Edinburgh before the Lords of Council & Session where Alexander (10,19) had to answer all the *'instances'* (complaints) of Lord William Earl of Sutherland.

The 1738 response written (I wish the sentences had been shorter!) by *'Alexr Gun of Wester Helmsdale'* – note he views his residence as Wester Helmsdale – pointed out MacHamish Gunns were '*not of the common class of tenants'*. So, firstly a reminder that Gunns never owned their estates, they were tenants of large estates which had sub-tenants on these properties. And Alexander (10,19) writes in detail about the past, money, duties to the Earl but there is not the slightest mention of Alexander (10,19) being Chief of the Clan with duties he needed to do. It would have been right and proper to put it in this document; the absence of such statement is further proof that he was never a Chief of the 'Clan' Gunn – such Chiefship, as said, is a modern invention from the early 1800s.

Alexander also noted '*there is an express clause in the Tack oblidgeing Mr Gun to wait on the said Noble Lord and his forsaids in all … Huntings and weapon shewings well armed when they be required by the said noble Lord and his foresaids for that within 24 hours warning'.*

That's interesting. At the very least it explains why Alexander Gunn (10,19) was required to turn up in the 1745 militia, which is discussed later in this life and it was not done due to being Head of a Clan. If you were Chief of a Clan here is another time when it would be mentioned. Ian Grimble points out that people on the Sutherland estate had *'to enlist in the family (Sutherland) regiment on demand'*[596] so it is of no surprise that Alexander (10,19) had to show up *'well armed'* when required.

Alexander writes seemingly all of the documents for his side of the case and he was trying to put the best case forward but, as said, at no time is the slightest mention made of him being 'Chief of the Clan Gunn' even when it would be appropriate to use the title – he lists all the Lord of Strathnaver titles for example - but he remains *'Alexr Gun of Western Helmsdale'* or similar depending on the year. No document has him as '*of Badanloch and Western Helmsdale.'*

An Earl of Sutherland follow up to that document included *'Remarks on the queries condescended on by McKeamish upon which he wants a new proof to be taken by Mr Sellar 23 September 1738'*. (The use of McKeamish here was to identify Alexander Gunn (10,19) from other Gunns. Line three, for example, of the document uses *'Gunn MacHeorish'* (MacHeorish Gunns were Gunns of Borrobol, one of whom married Alexander's sister), again showing the term MacHamish was nothing special, just a way to identify a particular family of Gunns. Thomas Sage in his history identifies MacHeorish as meaning of 'the line of George.' This applies to George of Borrobol's (9,16) descendants.)

[596] Page 254, Ian Grimble, *Clans and Chiefs.*

SUMMARY So what does this mean? Basically Alexander (10,19) and the Earl of Sutherland were again in a massive, tenancy legal brawl around 1738 and Alexander (10,19) seems to be in the wrong. We do not have any clear statement as to how this battle started but again it puts paid to the idea that Alexander (10,19) was some sort of legal genius who could execute people.

I have not been able to find the papers saying how this dispute was resolved.

5) Cattle droving and other issues

Alexander had one further major, long-term financial dispute which involved Lord Strathnaver about expenses related to cattle droving to England and other issues.

There are documents[597] concerning a droving dispute about 886 black cattle sold in England from the Highlands. Alexander had been involved with taking the cattle to England for sale. The dispute started around September 1734. The cattle were from Alexander Gunn, Robert Gordon tacksman of Lochnaver (brother german of John Gordon of Embo) and the Earl of Sutherland, perhaps others. The cattle sold for £1134 / 10/ 2d in total which again is a large monetary amount but the dispute was about costs of £60 / 10 shillings and £10 / 10 shillings damages - £71 in total - owed by Alexander Gunn to the others. This cost was accepted by the Sherriff but Alexander disputed the amount. The dispute continued until 1738 and included costs of drovers taking the cattle. Apparently, Alexander Gunn had agreed the accounts in November 1734 when drunk and presumably later – when sober – questioned them. The outcome of this long running dispute is not clear but is it sensible to antagonise the Earl of Sutherland again for what seem a comparatively small amount?

Further financial disputes with the Earl of Sutherland are documented on 12 May 1739 and 27 June 1739. The May document was about the result of independent assessors valuing mason work done on a dwelling and office – these assessors valued them at much less than what Alexander claimed the work was worth. I suspect Alexander claimed for 'improvements' on the estate and that seems to overstate the value of the work undertaken – or he paid far too much for it. The 27 June 1739 document involved the Court of Session in Edinburgh – it concerns monetary amounts owed to the Earl of Sutherland from 1720. The amount is unclear and the legal process is 'suspended.'

As well as his own legal problems Alexander also did legal work for others. He was a 'Commissioner of Caithness' as shown in a document[598] of 28 July 1748. Alexander's father Chief Donald Crotach was by 1704 a *'Commissioner of Supply.'*[599] These positions could be similar. Basically, the Commissioners of Supply were tax raisers with some local government functions. It's a position of social standing; there were thirty Commissioners for Sutherland in Chief Donald's time including the

[597] National Records of Scotland CS173/55. CS 226/3913. These references give a group of documents with no further NRS way to identify single items.

[598] National Records of Scotland CS173/55. CS 226/3913.

[599] *Anne: Translation; 1704, 6 July, Edinburgh, Parliament; Parliamentary Register; Saturday 5 August 1704; Legislation; Act anent supply; 1704 / 7 /69.* He was not a Commissioner in 1685. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=u8ArAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA23&lpg=PA23&dq=1685+++sutherland+commissioner++supply&source=bl&ots=st71xquWDi&sig=tM60hmLXlOeuBWAsyZ3tpwW2-NI&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjC2fnt4trZAhXSFsAKHahyBEcQ6AEISDAI#v=onepage&q=1685%20%20%20sutherland%20commissioner%20%20supply&f=false accessed 7 March 2019.

Earl of Sutherland and Lord Strathnaver. The 1748 document was by James Mackay and requested Alexander to pay the Earl of Sutherland a bit over £20 and James also paid Alexander a small amount of money owed since 1738. interestingly the document is drawn up at Badanloch. Was James Mackay the new 'owner of Badanloch?'

6) Military 'career'

Alexander's (10,19) military 'career' needs rethinking; he is often referred to as Captain Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Badanloch. He was certainly Captain of the Clan Sutherland Independent 1st Company at Inverness in 1745. This Independent Company was formed to help put down the Jacobites; these independent companies were normally drawn from a Clan but in Alexander Gunn's (10,19) case it was Clan Sutherland.[600] Of the eighteen Independent Companies (they were an irregular militia) so formed only Clan Sutherland 1st Company and one from Inverness, had a Captain not of the Clan they were leading. There was also a Clan Sutherland Independent 2nd Company led by Peter Sutherland. The two Sutherland companies were listed as *'The earl of Sutherland's men.'*[601] In the list of officers of all the Independent Companies raised in 1745 (meaning Captains, Lieutenants and Ensigns) there was only one Gun(n) and it's '*Alexander Gun, Esq.'*[602]

Certainly, the two Sutherland companies fought at the Siege of Fort Augustus in December 1745 and one of the two companies fought at the skirmish of Tongue[603] but I suspect neither event involved Alexander Gunn (10,19) as he is not listed in those who received prizemoney[604] from the captured Jacobite money which would be expected as he was Captain. By June 1746 the role of the companies had been markedly reduced and by October 1746 they were disbanded. Alexander's (10,19) military activity seems to have lasted, at most, eleven months. His age needs to be considered – he was probably born about 1683 so he would be about 63 years old when the action occurred so lack of participation is understandable.

How serious was this soldiering to be viewed? *'In Sutherland during 1745-6 tenants negotiated conditions that reduced soldiering to little more than an ancillary activity shaped and limited by the needs of the agrarian sector ... As a result, young men were to be taken in order 'to relieve those that have gone out of the parish of Farr and Kildonan that are tenants and have families...''*[605] It seems probable that these independent companies were not important cogs in the military machine as they consisted of young farmers and farm labourers who could only be briefly spared.

I would suggest, paying attention to the legal battle of 1738 involving the Earl of Sutherland and Alexander Gunn (10,19), that Alexander Gunn (10,19) may have been forced to turn out for Clan Sutherland or lose Wester Helmsdale. He would certainly not be paid as it was part of his rent to turn

[600] See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independent_Highland_Companies#endnote_note_a1 accessed 10 July 2013
[601] Page 105, James Brown *A History of the Highlands and of the Highland Clans, Volume 3.*
[602] Page 334, David Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland with details of the Military Service, Volume 2*.
[603] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independent_Highland_Companies accessed 22 July 2013.
[604] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skirmish_of_Tongue accessed 22 July 2013.
[605] Page 194, ed S. Murdoch and A. Mackillop, *Scottish Military Experience c 1550-1900.*

out when required. I am doubtful that his men – as mentioned by Mark Rugg Gunn[606] meant many – if any – Gunns; after all it was the Clan Sutherland's company. The Earl of Sutherland would have been responsible for the presentation of the company, not Alexander Gunn (10,19). This economic dependence of Alexander Gunn is also shown in the following extract.

The Highlands of Scotland in 1750

The Gunns and Chief Alexander are described in *The Highlands of Scotland in 1750.* It was written by a 'spy' who was not Scottish.[607]

'In Lord Sutherland's Lands live a small but fierce Clan of the name of Gun. They are about 150 in number, they have a Chieftain of their own, who lives upon a small mortgage not above £20 per annum, but his Clan give him a generous assistance to keep up the Grandeur of a Chieftain. They have been Inhabitants of Sutherland for above 500 years… The Earls of Sutherland … Proprietors of every foot of Land the Guns possess … Their Chieftain Captain Gun, was one of the militia Captains in time of the Late Rebellion, and it was no secret that his dependence on Lord Sutherland was rather the Motive of his Acting as he did, than his own inclination.' Pages 12-13.

This is an interesting paragraph for several reasons.

Firstly, 'Chieftain Captain Gun' is Chief Alexander Gunn of Wester Helmsdale (10,19) but Wester Helmsdale was a decaying estate. A Sutherland Estate 1738 document[608] described Wester Helmsdale as *'on good tenantry at his entry but now it is almost all gone to ruin by both for want of Tennants and Biggings*(?) *The change house on said Tack is as publick as any in the country and commodious for travellers but the Doors are shut up with stones rendering it almost ruinous. There is hardly Barns to thresh the corn in and notwithstanding of this he is gifting away the Timber to others...'* This book's description is twelve years later than this document.

Secondly, Clan Gunn *'have a Chieftain of their own, who lives upon a small mortgage not above £20 per annum, but his Clan give him a generous assistance to keep up the Grandeur of a Chieftain.'* How far do I believe this part sentence? 'Chieftain' here is used by the author as a term for the most important Gunn, it was not an actual title. Next, the word 'mortgage' does not relate to the Highlands which uses wadsets and tacks for land. Chief Alexander may well be down to £20 income a year in 1750 from, say, rental of parts of the Wester Helmsdale Estate but I find it unlikely that '*his Clan give him a generous assistance to keep up the Grandeur of a Chieftain'* given the 1738 document description of Wester Helmsdale and the lack of supportive evidence. Is the Clan comment just a fiction told by Captain Alexander to a stranger? Probably as following Alexander's death his family does not live at Wester Helmsdale and his son Chief William can only buy a lowly officer rank in the real British Army but his younger son Morrison can only join the, in effect, Home Guard – see their

[606] Page 193 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* says that Alexander's *'financing of his regiment during the Stewart (sic) rising … reduced his finances considerably'* and that explained why the Gunns ran out of money. This does not match the facts, not least that it was not a Gunn regiment.

[607] Anonymous – the hint is of a spy - and with an introduction by Andrew Lang, from a manuscript in the King's Library in the British Museum, published by Blackwood in 1895.

[608] Sutherland Estate papers, National Library of Scotland, Deposit 313, 298 (bundle 24) and 309 (bundle 35).

lives. There was not enough money for them both to both buy commissioned rank in the real Army. The money of Captain Alexander had gone.

Thirdly, Captain Alexander certainly turned out for the government against the Jacobites probably due to economic necessity (see the legal documents as well) but does that mean he was pro-Jacobite or didn't care either way? The language of the extract is not clear. Alexander would have been 69 at the time and so not prime fighting material.

Fourthly, the Guns did not own land. The wealthy, extended Clan Gunn Chief line only wadsetted / had tacks of, over time, the Estates of Killernan, Badanloch, Kinbrace, Borrobol, Wester Helmsdale, Achentoul and so on. Such land was Sutherland Estate property.

Finally, note the small number of male Guns suitable to be included in an army (the book makes clear that is what the number represents) - 150. By comparison the book gives Rosses 600, McKays 700, McKenzie 3000 'but a third of them are Dross,' McLeod 900, MacDonalds 800, McKinnon 240, Camerons 900, Grants a 1000, Gordons about a 1000 and so on. The point is simple, the Gunns were a small Clan in the 1750s – the idea they were numerous is to be rejected.

7) Second marriage

His second wife was Anne / Ann Rose b. 12 September 1733[609] d. 28 February 1793[610] who was the second of five children of the Reverend William Rose[611] (of Loth 1739 to 1745 but formerly of Kildonan – he died February 1755[612]). Anne probably married around 1753/55,[613] perhaps soon after the death of her father in 1755. She was much younger than the children of the first marriage.

This second marriage was unusual. Alexander Gunn (10,19) was born in 1683. Anne / Ann was born in 1733. That's a fifty-year age gap. Let's say Anne married soon after her father died in 1755. That means she married a man in his early seventies. Why would she marry someone so much her senior? The records for historical demography in rural Scotland are basically non-existent – *'The only reliable listings for Scotland before the mid-eighteenth century relate to urban communities'*[614] – so we have no idea of how common such an age gap was.

So what might be the reason? An arranged marriage? Very unlikely as such marriages were occasionally for the social elite[615] to preserve massive estates or make political progress and I can find no record of such an arranged marriage with such an age gap. As well, this social elite idea does not apply with Anne / Ann and Alexander (10,19); she was the daughter of a common Minister, he was the

[609] Page 90, 96, H. Scott, DD, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation*.
[610] Page 90, 96, H. Scott, DD, *ibid.*
[611] He died 12 February 1755. Page 241 H. Scott, DD, *ibid.*
[612] Page 517, R. Mackay, History *of the House of MacKay*, gives 1753 as death date. But see https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=_lwAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA108&lpg=PA108&dq=ann+rose+William+Rose+Loth&source=bl&ots=x8bf78QxCp&sig=i-8uVFBEq_Eu0AOFSYKMCujuiEw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjDp8370Z7bAhVMCcAKHfHNDugQ6AEIcjAR#v=onepage&q=ann%20rose%20William%20Rose%20Loth&f=false accessed 25 May 2018.
[613] *Burke's Peerage.*
[614] Page 8, R. A. Houston, *The Population History of Britain and Ireland 1500-1750*.
[615] See page 20 'Elite women and the Life-Course in Eighteenth-Century Scotland' being from Katherine Glover's *Elite Women and Polite Society in Eighteenth-century Scotland.*

person who lost money in a legal case with the most important landowner in the county and one of the richest families in the country, as is discussed in the following legal matters section. Certainly, the wealthy of Sutherland would not be interested in such a 'loser' as Alexander (10,19). As well, an arranged marriage involving a Minister's daughter seems unlikely – the Minister's position could easily be at risk given the relationship the Earl of Sutherland had with Alexander (10,19). Anne / Ann's youngest sister Barbara married a Minister about ten years older than herself; why did Anne / Ann not have a similar marriage? If Anne / Ann was an average twenty-year-old surely a man closer to her age to marry could be found rather than Alexander (10,19)?

Was Anne / Ann perhaps Alexander's (10,19) housekeeper and somehow married him? Possible; her father had, after all, been Minister at Kildonan before he moved to Loth so he would know the households of Kildonan. Was Anne / Ann pregnant when she married? Unlikely given her father's position; *'The trend of illegitimacy was steadily downwards from the 1660s … in Caithness … and the Highlands demonstrating the spread of church discipline.'*[616] But it's possible – William's (11) birth year could easily be around 1755; being commissioned slightly over twenty years of age would not be unusual. Being pregnant would explain why she might marry anyone who would have her including a man fifty years her senior. She might have been pregnant and a Housekeeper. Then again, she may not have been.

Alexander (10,19) and Anne / Ann had William (11) and Morrison (11). They were born between the year of her marriage and about 1759. This 1759 year is because William bought a commission as a Lieutenant[617] in the First Battalion of Lord MacLeod's Highlanders by April 1778 and Morrison was commissioned – but not a bought position - as a Lieutenant in the Sutherland Fencibles (a Home Guard type organisation) on 24 July 1779.[618] Being a lieutenant in 1778/1779 matches their approximate birth years of twenty years earlier. It is possible that they may have been older than twenty but unlikely to have been much younger.[619] William was certainly a retrospective Clan Gunn Chief but Morrison probably was not but his death date is unclear. See their later biographies.

i CHIEF WILLIAM[11] GUNN was born about 1755. He died on 10 September 1780 in India. Died without issue.

ii MORRISON[11] GUNN was born about 1760. He probably died in the UK, not Gibraltar as is often supposed. Died without issue.

Ann / Anne's behaviour when she married again after Alexander's (10,19) death in 1763[620] (perhaps 1764) is of interest. Anne / Ann married the Rev. John Ross, Minister of Kildonan, probably on 7 September 1770;[621] the stresses for the mother and her children William (11) and Morrison (11) are obvious in the gap between 1763 and 1770. The Reverend Alexander Pope of Reay wrote (probably)

[616] Page 119, I. D. Whyte, *Scotland before The Industrial Revolution, An Economic and Social History c. 1050 – c. 1750*.
[617] http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/macleod/1777.htm accessed 24 May 2018.
[618] Page 400, *The Scots Magazine, Volume 41*.
[619] 'We think of men joining the army in their late teens … most British soldiers enlisted later than that'. D. N. Hagist 'How old were the Redcoats? Age and Experience of British Soldiers in America'. https://allthingsliberty.com/2014/05/how-old-were-redcoats-age-and-experience-of-british-soldiers-in-america/ accessed 31 March 2018. For details of the enrolments of William and Morrison in the army see their lives.
[620] Page 162 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*, the 1896 tree and *Burke's Peerage* for examples.
[621] *Burke's Peerage.*

of William (11) and Morrison (11) that *'it is to be wished that some generous person would take care of their education'*.[622] which suggests a carefree attitude to life which might have resulted in Anne / Ann's need to marry a much older man than herself.

The Reverend Donald Sage wrote of Ann / Anne Gunn and her family after remarrying that -

David Ross, the miller at Claggan in Strathbeg was the only son of Mr. John Ross, Minister of Kildonan ... His Mother was the widow of Gunn MacSheumais (MacHamish) (10,19) *who had resided at Badanloch, which he had rented, or held as wadset, from the Earl of Sutherland. MacSheumais had a number of sons, who all went into the army and died in action. Mr. John Ross married the widow, and the whole family then came to reside at Kildonan manse. They were all very extravagant, however, and nearly ruined Mr. Ross in wordly circumstances. By the decease of all her sons by MacSheumais, the direct line of the Clann Gunn MacSheumais became extinct. Mr. John Ross had two children David and Catherine. Kate Ross married David Gunn (14), eldest son of Robert Gunn of Achaneccan*[623] *(13,56), who, after the death of his wife's half-brothers, by the highland law,*[624] *succeeded to the Chiefship of the Clan Gunn. David Gunn however, never laid claim to the honours. He was an eminently pious man; and leaving the honours of this world to be usurped by Hector Gunn at Thurso (12,36), he himself humbly but ardently aspired after the honours which came from above ... he lived at Achaneccan, but afterwards went to reside in Caithness-shire in 1827."*[625] *The Rev. John Ross died 28 March 1775*[626] *aged forty-two.*

After Ann / Anne Rose's remarriage she had children including a daughter Catherine Ross; Catherine was therefore a half-sister to William and Morrison. Catherine married David[13] Gunn son iii of Robert 'Sennachy' Gunn, (13,56) who descended from William of Acheneccan (8,12).

Summary
There is little to commend Alexander Gunn (10,19).

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Biographies of Captain Alexander Gunn's last two children follow – Chief William Gunn and Morrison Gunn.

[622] Page 33 Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[623] http://clangunn.weebly.com/william-in-achanaichan--achaneccan-line-being-the-2nd-son-of-donald-the-scholar.html accessed 31 March 2018. And see http://www.fpchurch.org.uk/publications/the-free-presbyterian-magazine/1998-to-2003/november-2003/the-achreny-mission-3-after-the-disruption-part-1-rev-d-w-b-somerset-698/ accessed 31 March 2018.
[624] I am not sure of the basis for this law (tradition) claim; I suspect it is hyperbole. The Acheneccan line is related to the traditional Chief line but it is not a senior line. More interestingly I note that on the following page Sage mentions *'One Lieutenant Gunn lived at Ach-na-h'naighe. He held the place on lease from the proprietor for nineteen years ... He married a Miss Bruce of Thurso, a woman of colour, daughter of Mr Harry Bruce, a West Indian planter, by whom he got some money, which was soon dissipated. They had a large family. After the dispersion of the tenantry in 1819, Gunn, for a compensation, resigned his lease and went to reside, first at Thurso, and afterwards at Balfruch, parish of Croy... He died at Inverness in 1814.'* There is no known relationship to the MacHamish family, it's just too interesting a life to not mention in this text.
[625] Page 209, Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica; or, Parish Life in the North of Scotland.*
[626] Page 144, David Dobson, *Scottish Highlanders on the Eve of the Great Migration 1725-1775 – The Northern Highlanders.*

11. CHIEF WILLIAM GUNN

Chief William Gunn was born circa 1757 and died at Conjeveram, Mysore (now Tamil Nadu), India, on 10 September 1780. William (11) was the elder son from the second marriage of Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Badanloch and later of Wester Helmsdale. For his early life see Alexander's (10,19) biography. We do not know William's (11) exact birthdate (although his military enrolment document might show it if it could be found) nor the date of his parents' marriage. William joined (most likely through a bought commission) the First Battalion of the 73rd (Highland) Regiment of Foot[627] (MacLeod's Highlanders) as a lieutenant. It was raised in December 1777. The First Battalion landed at Madras 20 January 1780. *'Of the 19 lieutenants of the 1st battalion (of the 73rd Regiment), William Gunn stood 15th... six feet three'*[628].

William Gunn died 10 September 1780 in the Battle of Pollilur of the Second Anglo-Mysore War of 1779-1784. It was a battle of importance;

After the treaty of Paris in 1763, the only serious political threats to the British in the Madras area came from Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan. During the war of 1780, the prowess of Hyder Ali and his cavalry sometimes greatly intimidated the British. In no situation was this more apparent than during the battle of Pullalur, an area about ten miles north of Kanchipuram to the west of Madras. This battle was fought by a British force under the command of Colonel John Baillie against those of Hyder Ali and Tipu on 10 September 1780, shortly after the beginning of the war. Various mistakes made by the British commander-in-chief Sir Hector Munro and by Baillie himself resulted in the isolation of Baillie's force. Hyder Ali and Tipu, aided by the French, soundly defeated Baillie's forces: of the eighty-six officers in Baillie's force who participated, thirty-six were killed or died of their wounds, thirty-four were wounded and taken prisoner, and sixteen were unwounded but taken prisoner.

Though the military encounter was brief, it had great consequences for the fortunes and self-esteem of the British at the time and long afterwards. Moreover, because the defeat placed in doubt the British ability to defend Madras, Hyder's rout of Baillie greatly decreased British political and economic credibility...[629]

In other words, William Gunn was killed in a battle which the British lost, to a significant extent because of British mistakes. He was unfortunate; out of the British force of 3,820 only 336 were killed.[630] The final result of this war was the East India Company was told by the British government to make peace with the Kingdom of Mysore and basically the status quo resumed.

The official view of the events[631] involving William Gunn is simple –

[627] From 1786 the Regiment was called the 71st Highland Light Infantry.
[628] From Thomas Sinclair's first supplement, published by the 'Northern Ensign' 2.12.1902.
[629] http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft038n99hg&chunk.id=s1.1.2&toc.id=ch01&brand=ucpress accessed 27 March 2013.
[630] Figures abstracted from Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Anglo-Mysore_War accessed 27 March 2013.
[631] There, are of course, all sorts of other stories attached to how William died, none of which have supporting evidence.

'*Upon this unfortunate occasion, the flank companies were almost annihilated. Capt. Baird received seven wounds, and fell into the hands of the enemy. Lieut. Lindsay received nine and was also made prisoner. Lieut. Lindsay was totally disabled by his wounds; and Lieut. Gunn, of the grenadiers, and Lieut. Geddes Mackenzie, of the light company, killed, being the sum total of the officers serving at the time with the two companies. Of the non-commissioned officers and privates, only two men joined the battalion, and those were found in the jungle, desperately wounded. The melancholy fate of these companies rendered it necessary for Lord M'Leod to form two new flank companies from the battalion'*.[632]

The 1822 letter and Clan Gunn Tree accepts William 'was the last McKeamish.' I note the avoidance of the word Chief. It does NOT accept 'Morison' as a McKeamish. The letter and Tree do state the 'heirship (*to Chief William Gunn)* obtained by *13.47 (Chief)* Lt George Gunn, son of *12.36 (Chief)* Hector Gunn late merchant in Thurso…'

That's important - in other words, Gunns in 1822 accepted as the equivalent of Chief 12.36 Chief Hector Gunn and 13.47 Lt. George Gunn.

11. MORRISON GUNN

Morrison (11) was the second son from the second marriage of Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Badanloch and later of Wester Helmsdale. For his early life see Alexander's (10,19) biography. Morrison may also have been six foot three inches.[633]

It is mythically supposed[634] Morrison joined the Second Battalion of the then 73rd Regiment - Lord Macleod's Highlanders – probably on the basis that his brother joined the First Battalion and it is also supposed that Morrison died at Gibraltar whilst part of that Second Battalion. These suppositions seem to originate from this story - *'Morrison died of consumption, immediately after the siege of Gibraltar[635] which he went through. He was most anxious to return to his native land as soon as the fortress was relieved, but his Colonel seeing that he had only a few days to live refused leave… The 2nd* (Battalion) *came home from Gibraltar in 1783…. Rev. Archibald Gunn, New Brunswick, Canada…says that the chief died not of consumption but of his wounds'*. [636]

The Gibraltar story is extremely doubtful -

- There is a record[637] of the officers of the Second Battalion of the 73rd Regiment and Morrison Gunn is not on the roll as an officer. If you are not on the British military record you were not part of that military. His brother was certainly in the First Battalion; he is on the rolls as a Lieutenant.[638]

[632] Page 278, *The United Services Journal and Naval and Military Magazine, 1831, Part III.*
[633] Page 193, Mark Rugg Gun, *Clan Gunn*.
[634] Page 196, Mark Rug Gunn, *ibid*.
[635] The Great Siege of Gibraltar lasted 24 June 1779 – 7 February 1783.
[636] http://clangunn.weebly.com/thomas-sinclair-supplement-4-23-12-1902.html accessed 2 April 2018.
[637] https://www.archive.org/stream/historyofscottis02kelt#page/596/mode/2up accessed 2 April 2018. Or http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/macleod/1777.htm accessed 2 April 2018.

- There is a range of primary sources[639] from the Gibraltar siege detailing life, deaths and injuries sustained by many, including the soldiers. I have not found any mention of Morrison Gunn although I have found injuries and deaths relating to the 73rd Regiment.
- The idea of a Commander being concerned with leave in 1783 from siege worn Gibraltar is odd; I doubt there would have been any chance of leave from such a place as the Battalion was getting ready to return to Britain. Gibraltar was not then a holiday spot with regular transport for occasional military personnel.

A Morrison Gunn was gazetted as a lieutenant from the war-office on 24 July 1779 to the *Sutherland Fencibles* which was raised in February 1779. The Fencibles recruits were from the Sutherland Estates.[640] It was officially formed at Fort George (near Inverness) in February 1779 and then served at Edinburgh. Recruiting originally went poorly; but then *'the promise of land in return for service'*[641] was offered. This offer may well have motivated Morrison to enlist. The Regiment was disbanded in 1783. It was a sort of home guard. I suspect this Sutherland Fencibles lieutenant was our Morrison Gunn (11) as there were very few Morrison Gunns, the Sutherland Fencibles came from the Sutherland Estate where Morrison lived, Morrison had the example of his older brother joining the real army (an expensive occupation) and Morrison needed a job as the family no longer owned Estates as money probably had run out especially after William's (11) commission had been bought. As well, the Sutherland Fencibles makes sense with the being *'refused leave'* of the original story; you could get leave from Edinburgh or Inverness far more sensibly than from war-torn, isolated Gibraltar. Also, this was the second incarnation of the Sutherland Fencibles, so supporting the use of '2nd' in the original story. It is to be regretted that the records[642] of the 2nd Sutherland Fencibles are minimal.

It is most likely, therefore, that Morrison died from consumption (given the lack of glamour of the death I suspect it may have a real origin) in Scotland sometime after being commissioned on 24 June 1779 but the exact date[643] – and cause - of his death is not known. Given William died 10 September 1780 it is not clear that Morrison was ever 'Chief' of the Clan Gunn. I suspect he was not.

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[638] http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/macleod/1777.htm accessed 2 April 2018.
[639] For example, John Drinkwater's 1785 *A History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar*. He was a member of the 72nd Regiment.
[640] http://www.electricscotland.com/history/sketches/highlandsketches91.htm accessed 2 April 2018.
[641] Page xxvii, ed R. J. Adam *Papers on Sutherland Estate Management Volume 1.*
[642] Page xii, R.H. Burgoyne, Historical *Records of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders*.
[643] http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/files/Gunn,%20Michael%20James%20-%20Interlocutor%20and%20Note.pdf Lord Lyon site accessed 1 April 2018 provides a date of 1 May 1785 for Morrison's death; this is wrong. If the Gibraltar story had been true then Morrison needed to die before May 1783 when his battalion returned from Gibraltar. The Sutherland Fencibles were disbanded in 1783.

10.20 GEORGE 'CORRISH' GUNN (Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born in 1682.

George (10,20) was the second son of Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) and was tacksman of Corrish.[644] He married Isobel Polson. The clearest statement about his children is from the 1822 Clan Gunn Family Tree which has Donald (11.27) and Alexander (11.28) as sons of George of Corrish but with no descendants. In other words, they died without issue – the letter by Wiliam Gunn which accompanied this Tree would not have been written with the contents it had if the Corrish line had continued in 1822. It's the earliest account and so should be accepted.

There are various, confusing stories about the children of George Gunn of Corrish over many years but these stories lack documentary support. The confusion is perhaps because in barely literate times people became confused between Corrish Gunns and MacHeorish (George of Borrobol) Gunns; they sound so similar. There is also a strong suggestion of illegitimate lines – see page 6 of the 'Northern Ensign and Weekly Gazette' of 23 February 1892.

There is a messy February 1736 legal story about George (10,20)[645] which includes Edinburgh legal letters and in which his brother Chief Alexander of Badanloch later Wester Helmsdale (10,19) supposedly swallowed the evidence against his brother George (10,20). I find the idea that a person could swallow evidence in an actual court of law and get away with it unlikely – if you are an in a court and you destroy evidence then you are surely in big trouble. I am reasonably sure of a court case due to the letters, but the rest seems to be a myth.

10.21 ESTHER GUNN Esther was the elder daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn and was born around 1685. She (10,21) married Donald Mackay of Skerray. She is 'Bessie' in the 1896 Gunn Tree. Eldest son Hector Mackay born between 1725 and 1730.[646]

10.22 WILLIAM (LT. COL.) GUNN was born about 1686 / 1695. He married ANN ROSS in 1728. She was born in Scotland. He died 28 May 1768[647] Naarden, Netherlands.

Lieutenant – Colonel William Gunn (Gun in the Brigade records) served in the Scots Brigade in the Netherlands. William Gunn was acting as a Captain by 6 May 1745[648] and was still Captain in the First Battallion of Major General Marjoribank's Company on 25 March 1752. By 3 July 1766 he was a Lieutenant Colonel of the 6th Company of Lieutenant-General Marjoribanks Regiment, 1st Battallion.[649] At that time William was only leading a company and there were seven companies in each of the two Battalions. The other company leaders had the ranks of a Major-General, four Lieutenants General, a

[644] Page 168 Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*, records this George Gunn as being 'of Borrobol'; this seems to be an error.
[645] Pages 160- 163, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[646] *The Book of Mackay*, pages 315-316.
[647] Military references give a date of death of 22 June 1768. See https://archive.org/stream/papersillustrat01scotgoog#page/n439/mode/2up/search/231 accessed 4 April 2018.
[648] https://archive.org/stream/papersillustrat01scotgoog#page/n439/mode/2up/search/231 accessed 4 April 2018.
[649] Drawn from ed. John Scott, James Ferguson *Papers illustrating the history of the Scots brigade in the service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1782; Volume 2*.

'Comm Coll' (Commandant Colonel?), two Colonels, two Majors and three Captains. The amount of senior ranks seems high from a modern perspective. Unlike the British Army the officer corps of the Scots Brigade in the Netherlands were officers by merit, they did not pay for their commissions.[650] As John Childs wrote of this Brigade *'nearly all of the Scottish officers, from the lowliest ensign to the most senior colonel, had little income apart from their service pay.'*[651] As such it provided a paid occupation for Scots with little – or no - money such as in William's case. Was he an inspiration to his nephews (11) Chief William Gunn and (11) Morrison Gunn?

He was witness to his brother's wadset (the brother being Chief Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Badanloch and later Wester Helmsdale) in 1718, thus suggesting William was born no later than around 1695 as it seems likely that one would have to be over twenty-one to be a witness. He married Anne Ross at Breda in the Netherlands on 5 January 1728. The name Ann Ross is of interest. Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Badanloch and later of Wester Helmsdale's second wife, after his death married the Reverend John Ross of Kildonan and so became an Ann Ross. Was the Anne Ross who married in the Netherlands related to the Reverend John Ross?

William (Lt. Col.) Gunn and Ann Ross had the following children with many descendants:

i MARGARET[11] GUNN (11,30) was born on 9 December 1728 in Breda, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands. She died on 26 December 1788 in Breda, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands. She married JOHAN FREDERICH BROCADES.

ii HELEN[11] GUNN was born on 9 January 1731 in Breda, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands. She died in Breda, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands.

iii MARY[11] GUNN was born on 23 April 1733 in Breda, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands. She married LT. DONALD GUNN in 1763. He was born about 1737. He died in 1807.

iv DONALD ROSS[11] GUNN was born on 26 September 1735 in Amsterdam Noord-Holland, Netherlands.

v JAMES[11] GUNN was born on 16 October 1737 in Tournai, Hainaut, Belgium. He died in Tournai, Hainaut, Belgium.

vi ALEXANDER[11] GUNN was born on 4 December 1738 in Tournai, Hainaut, Belgium. He died in Tournai, Hainaut, Belgium.

vii HUGH[11] GUNN was born on 29 January 1741 in Tournai, Hainaut, Belgium. He died in Tournai, Hainaut, Belgium.

Living descendants exist but I believe none hold the name Gunn. The line is, of course, Dutch and so not eligible to be Chief of the Clan Gunn.

10.23 MARGARET GUNN, the ongoing, traditional Chief line. *See PARTS FOUR A and FOUR B.*

Margaret's line exists and with continuously surnamed Gunns. It is, therefore, the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. She (and her line) is discussed in PARTS FOUR A and FOUR B.

[650] http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_doc003198401_01/_doc003198401_01_0004.php accessed 4 April 2018.
[651] http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_doc003198401_01/_doc003198401_01_0004.php accessed 4 April 2018.

PART FOUR A - 10.23 Margaret Gunn, her 1st son's Clan Gunn Chief line

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN GUNNS IN PART FOUR A

9.15 **Chief** Donald Crotach Gunn c. 1642 – 1708. *Married, with ongoing non-Gunn descendants, discussed in Part Three. He also had -*

10.23 MARGARET GUNN. *Married (10.24) John Gunn. Descendants still always surnamed Gunn. They had –*

11.31 **1st son.** George Dalfridh, Achsoriclate Gunn. *He had –*

12.36 **Chief**[652] Hector Gunn d. 1803. The 'Chief' title here is important – it is established by the Scottish Court of Session and was upheld for his son. This is when the Chief of the Clan Gunn title actually starts. *He had*

13.37 **Chief**[653] George Gunn in Rhives 1787- 1859.

Chief *George Gunn had* ***Chief*** *Donald Gunn who died in Cornwall 1863 without issue. His younger brother Hector then became* ***Chief of the Clan Gunn*** *until his death without issue in 1874. The line is now extinct of Gunns.*

11.32 **2nd son**. Alexander Dalnaglaton Gunn 1685 - 1765. *Descendants, continuously surnamed Gunns. This is the ongoing Clan Gunn Chief line. See PART FOUR B.*

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10.23 MARGARET GUNN was the daughter of (9.15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn. She married (10.24) John 'Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, Grimachary Gunn. I have combined their lives here for narrative clarity.

The Reverend Sage in his 1801 *Clan Gunn* wrote that John Gunn was of Kinbrace, Rumsdale and Grimachary (Greamachary / Griamachcarry / Graemachorry). A 1738 Sutherland Estate document says John was of Rumsdale and later Knockfin.[654] The Lord Lyon Sellar 2011 Interlocutor on Gunn matters said Kinbrace. I have also used the 1896 Clan Gunn Family Tree by Alexander Gunn of Braehour which says, approximately, Kinbrace and Grimachary. Combined these give Kinbrace, Rumsdale, (Knockfin) then Grimachary for John Gunn. These places make sequential sense but John is a farmer; these places were not lived in at the same time.

[652] Chief Hector Gunn was legally recognised by the Court of Session. From that time the title of Chief was awarded to earlier senior Gunns such as to the earlier Chief William Gunn who died in 1780. See the following footnote. For further discussion of the Chief issue from 1780 to the mid-1960s see Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

[653] Legally recognised by the Court of Session. As also in effect recognised by the first Clan Gunn Society by 1821, see Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*, pages 172-174.

[654] Knockfin I suspect is an error – it is not supported by the other texts. Where John went after Rumsdale was not central to the legal matters of the 1738 document. Knockfin (Heights), though, is very close to the Achentoul Estate which is where John went after Rumsdale.

John Gunn (born around 1670) was the son of George Gunn (9.16) of Borrobol. There has been confusion about this John Gunn over many years mainly because of the word Kinbrace which is occasionally attached to his name. The problem is that there was a close family branch to John Gunn (10.24) of other Gunns[655] who owned the Kinbrace Estate near Borrobol and people assumed these Kinbrace Estate Gunns included this John Gunn because of the word Kinbrace. That's wrong. John Gunn was not a Kinbrace Estate Gunn - he was a 'Kinbrace *Farm'* Gunn. Canmore, the National Records of the Historic Environment of Scotland,[656] has Kinbrace Farm on Kinbrace Hill. It was part of the Achentoul Estate which today is about 20,000 acres. Kinbrace Farm is basically the next property north of Borrobol Estate, John's childhood home. As, mentioned in the footnotes, Donald the Scholar (8.11) who was John Gunn's great-uncle, owned the Achentoul Estate before he bought the Kinbrace Estate in 1638 and Gunns continued to own the Achentoul Estate for at least six generations. Achentoul is across the valley from the Badanloch Estate and next door to Borrobol.

Kinbrace Farm was a pendicle to the Achentoul Estate – in other words, separate from the main Estate. It makes sense for a great-uncle to let one of his farms to his great-nephew just when the great-nephew was starting out in life – so the farm near John's childhood home of Borrobol was sensible for all concerned. In other words, Kinbrace Farm was a logical first adult home for John (10.24) and it explains Kinbrace being attached to his name when he was, as said, never part of the family group which owned the Kinbrace Estate. The word 'farm' was lost over time, not surprising in those early, barely literate times. John became (wrongly) assigned to the better known Kinbrace Estate.

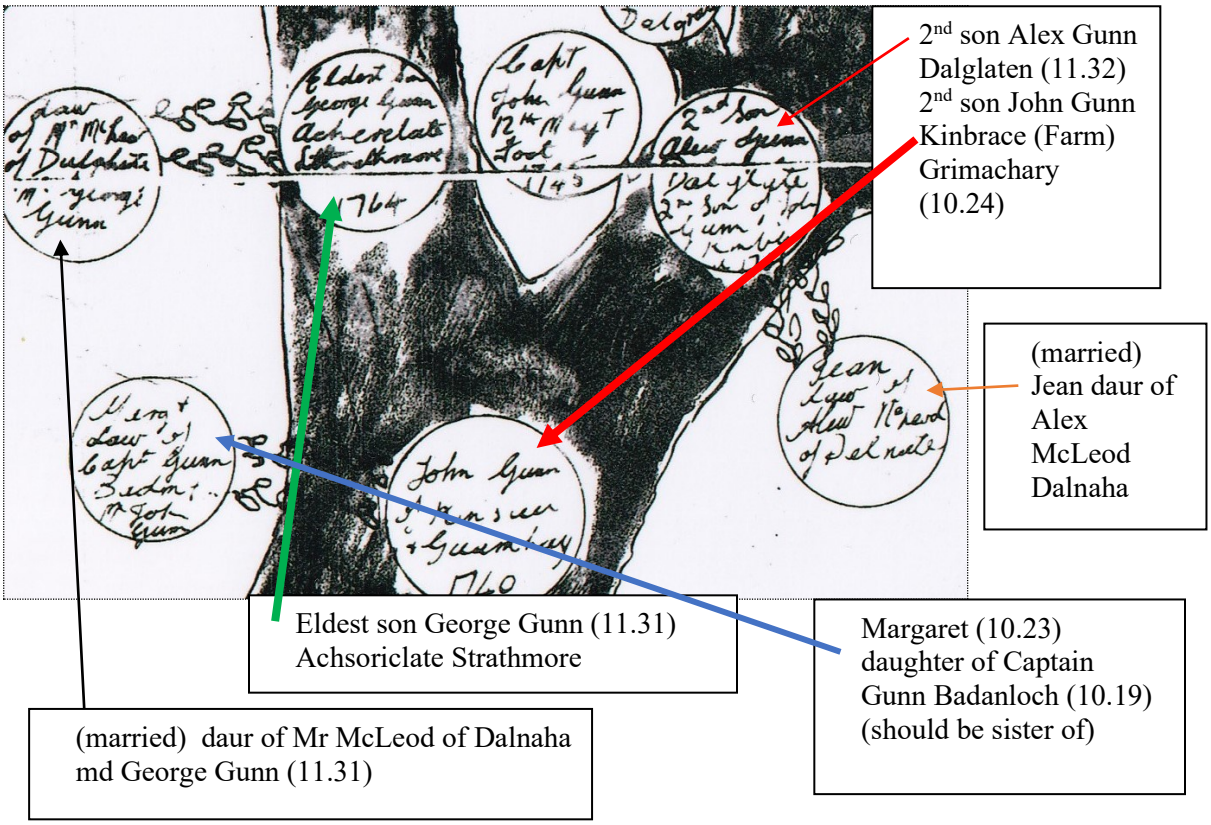
At some point John (10.24) met Margaret Gunn (10.23) (as said, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn 9.15) who was his first cousin. Romance bloomed and next we find John Gunn at Rumsdale, a pendicle of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn's Badanloch Estate.[657] Rumsdale is in the next valley east from Kinbrace Farm. John and Margaret were certainly at Rumsdale in Donald Crotach's time which is made clear by a NLS Sutherland Estate document of 1738 – Donald Crotach died by 1709.

There were two sons, at least, credited to John and Margaret – the first was George Gunn (11.31). George, after leaving home, at one point lived at Dalfridh.[658] There is only one place on the Free / Fridh river where that was possible. It is today called the 'Shepherd's House' and abuts the Borrobol Estate. In other words, when John Gunn (10.24) of Kinbrace Farm's first son (George (11.31) started to spread his wings he did so on land next to his grandfather, George Gunn of Borrobol (9.16). That again seems sensible. It might also suggest that John Gunn (10.24) spent a reasonable amount of time at Kinbrace Farm as Dalfridh was also very close to that Farm and it is not clear when John (10.24) and Margaret (10.23) went Rumsdale.

The 1896 Family Tree records that this George Gunn (Dalfridh,11.31), son of John Gunn (10.24) and Margaret Gunn (10,23) of Kinbrace Farm and elsewhere, lived at Achscoriclate by Loch More. And

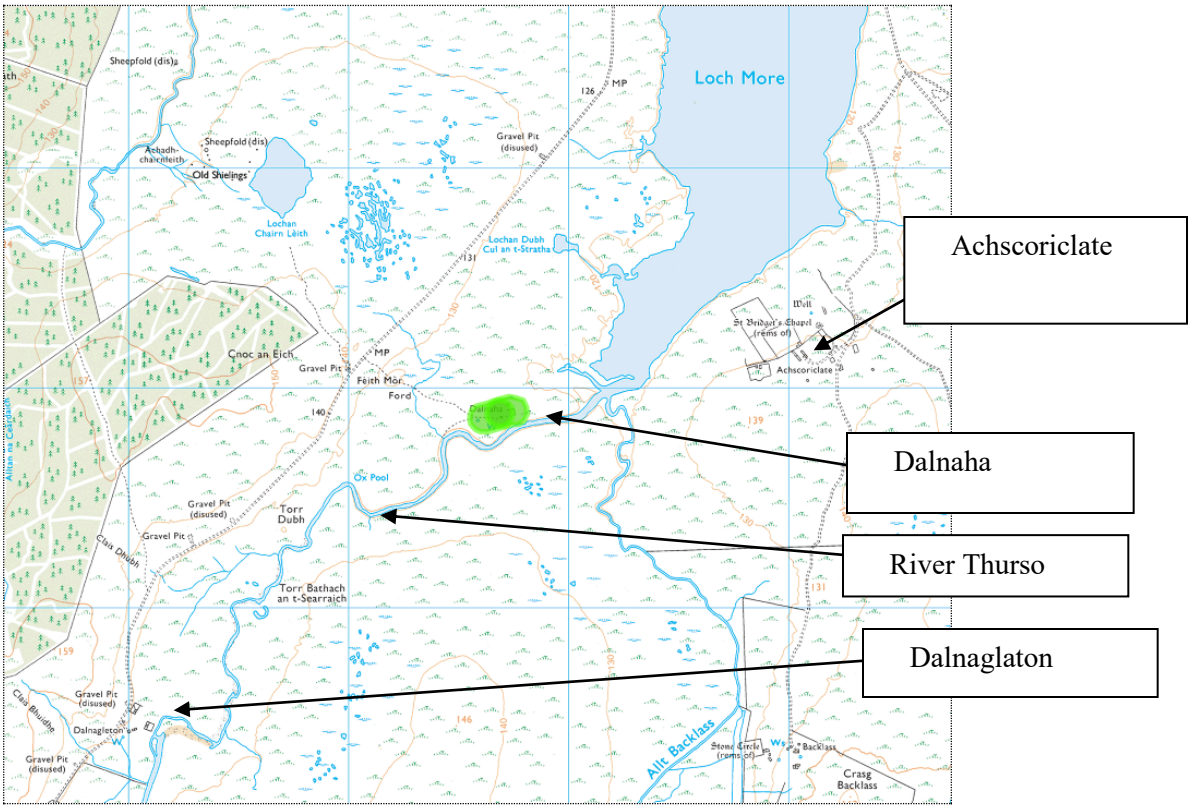
[655] The Gunns who owned the Kinbrace Estate were close relatives – (8.11) Donald Gunn the Scholar was the first 'owner,' he 'owned' Kinbrace by 1638 and his descendants only left Kinbrace in 1714. Importantly Donald Gunn was originally from the Achentoul Estate[655] next door to Kinbrace. Did he simultaneously own both? Donald the Scholar was John Gunn's great-uncle.
[656] https://canmore.org.uk/site/6658/kinbrace-hill accessed 29 April 2023.
[657] It would be interesting to know who had the Badanloch Estate before Chief Donald Crotach Gunn. Even more interesting would be to know how William Beag's children got Borrobol, Achentoul and Badenloch as I suspect they did.
[658] Lord Lyon Sellar in 2011 discussed George Gunn Dalfridh.

that Tree records George married a daughter of MacLeod of Dalnaha, which is the farm next door but to the west of Achscoriclate. That makes sense – George had a farm, married and made a home near to his in-laws.


2nd son Alex Gunn Dalglaten (11.32)
2nd son John Gunn Kinbrace (Farm) Grimachary (10.24)
(married) Jean daur of Alex McLeod Dalnaha
Eldest son George Gunn (11.31) Achsoriclate Strathmore
Margaret (10.23) daughter of Captain Gunn Badanloch (10.19) (should be sister of)
(married) daur of Mr McLeod of Dalnaha md George Gunn (11.31)

His brother Alexander (11.32) also married a (Janet) Macleod of Dalnaha and lived on the other side of Dalnaha - at Dalnaglaton - all his life.

It is possible that a third son of John (10.24) and Margaret Gunn (10.23) – another John – lived at Dalnaha and his family may have stayed on. The OS name books of 1871-1873 record Captain Gunn of Braehour (author of the 1896 Tree) and a D (Donald according to the 1871 census, aged 63) Gunn of Dalnaha as two sources for the meaning of 'Rumsdale' and 'Loch Rumsdale.' It is not surprising that family members would be knowledgeable of a place where their ancestors lived. See https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/ordnance-survey-name-books/caithness-os-name-books-1871-1873/caithness-volume-10/35 Of course, the Gunns of Dalnaha of 1871 may have nothing to do with the earlier Gunns.



The approximate distance between Dalnaha and Achscoriclate is no more than about two kilometres. The distance between Dalnaha and Dalnaglaton is about three kilometres – no other farms are in the way. From an OS map. It shows how the two Gunn brothers George (11,31) and Alexander (11,32) lived next door to their in-laws.

George (11.31) and Alexander's (11.32) parents (namely Margaret Gunn 10.23 and John Gunn 10.24) were, as said, at Rumsdale – Rumsdale farm (in the 1869 OS map) published 1878[659] is not at Loch Rumsdale but is on the Thurso River (down from Loch Rumsdale). No other farms are near it, nor ruins. One walking track is shown – it goes from Rumsdale along the river, past Dalganachan Farm, then past Dalnawillan Lodge (presumably a farm in earlier times) and then the next farm is Dalnaglaton where Alexander Gunn (11.32) lived. Then comes Dalnaha, then Achscoriclate.

In other words, where the sons lived was very close to both parents and parents-in-law.

Margaret's brother Chief Alexander (10.19) was not a nice man. See his earlier biography for details. He was involved in a massive legal brawl with the Duke of Sutherland about the Badanloch Estate which all ended up in the Court of Session in Edinburgh. The many Sutherland Estate documents (1738 and a few years either way) on it in the National Library of Scotland include huge detail from his tenants about how horrible he was, including to his in-laws. This horribleness including confiscating property with no legal reason. I have copies of many of these documents.

[659] See https://maps.nls.uk/view/216384467 accessed 22 February 2023.

It's not, therefore, surprising that John Gunn (10.24) (and presumably his wife but it is not clear when she died) moved on as he was a tenant on Chief Alexander's land. So, if John moved around 1715 (after a few years of Chief Alexander throwing his weight around) he would have been about 55. John Gunn relocated, as said, from Rumsdale to Grimachary.

The 1738 document records of John and his two brothers that 'no men in the parish in their time that had better means'- talking about the early 1700s. John, in other words, was a wealthy man and had Kinbrace Farm, then Rumsdale Farm and finally Grimacharry farm. Grimacharry rented for £20 a year in 1808[660] - Achintoul Estate rented for £40 in the same year.

John's last home of Grimachary was in the Achentoul Forest – a part of the Achentoul Estate. As said, Donald Gunn (8.11) the Scholar owned Achentoul at the time he took on the Kinbrace Estate in 1638, there is no record for him (or any Gunn at this time) giving up the Achentoul property. The 1896 Family Tree records six generation of Gunns[661] owning Achentoul. What this Tree does is support the idea that Gunns related to John (10.24) and Margaret Gunn (10.23) were still in control of Achentoul. So, Grimachary is again a greater family Gunn property like all the other places at which John lived.

So, what does this prove? The places associated with John (10.24) from various documents make it quite clear that there was only one John Gunn (10.24) who married Margaret Gunn (10.23), daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn (9.15). The place names associated with John's elder son George (11.31) also make it clear that there was only one George Gunn.

Overall, it is clear that Margaret Gunn (10.23), daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn (9.15) married John Gunn (10.24) in Borrobol, of Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, and Grimachary and that they had at least two sons, George (11.31) and Alexander (11.32).

John (10.24) probably had the illegitimate Captain John Gunn who was of the 12th Regiment of Foot in 1745. Given the date it suggests that Margaret Gunn (10.23) died before her husband.

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From pages 670, 739, 740, 810 of Origines *Parochilaes Scotia Volume 2*, published 1855 –
'1601… davach of Knokfyn, a davach of Fre, … a davach of Kynbrasche … two davachs of Kyldonan page 670
'1601… the davach of Knokfyn, the davach of Fre, … the davach of Kynbrasche…' page 740
'1545 … Kinbras Kildonan Knokfyn and Fre' page 810.
'1545 .. Kildonan, Kinbras, Knokfyn' page 739

Relevance. Davachs are a variable Pictish (Scottish) land measure. One suggestion is that 'at an early period, a davach … considered to be the portion necessary to the support of one household… in the

[660] Page 229, R. J. Adam, *Sutherland Estate Management 1802-1816, Volume 1.*
[661] In 1742 and 1744 the Estate was owned by a William Gunn.

fifteenth century of four times its original extent.'[662] So, a davach is not a large measure of land and in Northern Scotland in the late 1600s – 1700s one suspects that the traditional smaller sizes would have remained as all land was in the Dukes of Sutherland control for many centuries. Certainly, a davach was useful for no more than couple of families.

This size issue concerns John Gunn (10.24) in Borrobol, of Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, and Grimachary who married Margaret Gunn (10.23), daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn (9.15).

Given the small size of the davachs of Kinbrace, Knockfin and Free it is logical to assume that only one John Gunn (10.24) of Kinbrace (Farm) could marry one Margaret Gunn – the idea that there was a separate Margaret Gunn who married another John Gunn on the same land is highly implausible. As well, the need to have two George Gunns at Dalfridh with the same named parents is again implausible given the minimum populations these lands held.

John Gunn (10.24) lived at Greamachary. Greamachary in 1808 has only one tenant.[663] Again, this adds support for the idea that John Gunn of Kinbrace Farm is a singular person (and family). Rumsdale 1871-1875 is nothing more than a shepherd's hut.[664]

The small size of the davachs support the concept of only one set of these Gunns at one time was on these properties; the land was too small to hold other people sharing the same first and family names.

Margaret and John had the following children:

11.31[665] GEORGE DALFRIDH, ACHSORICLATE GUNN. He married a daughter of M. MCLEOD OF DALNAHA (sister to the following entry).

11.32 ALEXANDER DALNAGLATON GUNN was born 7 January 1685. He died June 1765. He married JANET MCLEOD IN DALNAHA (sister to the preceding entry) on 10 August 1716. She was born 1 August 1695.

iii CAPTAIN JOHN GUNN 12th Regiment of Foot in 1745 according to the 1896 tree (and elsewhere). Probably illegitimate – his exact parents are unclear. He possibly had a daughter with descendants.[666]

Margaret and John's eldest son was **11.31 GEORGE DALFRIDH ACHSORICLATE GUNN.** There are two descent lines from the Coroner for George and his brother Alexander of Dalnaglaton. One is from (10.23) Margaret, daughter of (9.15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, the other is the 'Borrobol' Gunn line. For sake of clarity, I am only giving the direct Chief Donald Crotach line here namely - Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown

[662] Page 205, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Volume 20, 1886
[663] Page 229, *Papers on Sutherland Estate Management, Volume 1,* R. J. Adam, 1972.
[664] https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/ordnance-survey-name-books/sutherland-os-name-books-1871-1875/sutherland-volume-20/287
[665] The number 31 is correct – the number 30 has been reserved in case I add detail to the descendants of 10.22 William Gunn.
[666] Page 166, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]. George married a daughter of M. MACLEOD OF DALNAHA.

George Gunn – of Dalfridh and Achsoriclate - was born about 1683. For his life see the detail provided in his parents' earlier biography. George had one son who became Chief Hector Gunn (12.36) with descendants. This Gunn named line died out over time see
https://clangunn1.blogspot.com/2023/05/the-simplified-clan-gunn-chief-line-may.html

See Appendix 1 for how this line became Chief of the Clan Gunn following due legal process.

George Gunn and Unknown MacLeod had the following child:

12.36 CHIEF HECTOR GUNN 1st son He married JANETTE MACKAY from the Aberach Mackays, being part of the main Mackay family into which many MacHamish Gunns married. **Chief** Hector Gunn and Janette Mackay had the following children:

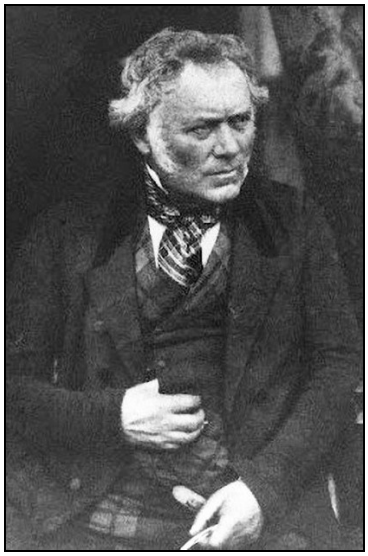
13.47 CHIEF GEORGE GUNN who was born in 1787. He died in 1859. He married MARGARET MACDONALD.

ii JANET / JESSIE GUNN. She married WILLIAM MACKAY. (Of Tongue?)

iii A possible ROBERT GUNN. Baptised 11 June 1789. No further definite information. Did he migrate to South Africa? If so, no children.[667]

iv Four other children: Christian b. 1781, Jean b.1782, Katherine (a twin for Robert?) b. 1792 and Marion b. 1794. No further details.

13.47 CHIEF GEORGE GUNN was born in 1787. He died in 1859. The 1822 Gunn Tree records him as 'The present McKeamish' – or Chief.



(13.47) Chief George Gunn, perhaps aged around 50.

[667] See https://www.wikitree.com/photo.php/1/10/Gunn-3935.jpg accessed 17 February 2024.

He married MARGARET MACDONALD 1797 – 1883. She died in Elgin, presumably at or near the home of her second daughter Christina Macdonald Gunn (Smith). George served in the Royal Navy for ten years in the Mediterranean where he was severely injured at the battle of Santa Maura in 1810, a now Greek Ionian island, then controlled by French forces. He became a Factor for the Duchess of Sutherland in 1816, moving to the Dunrobin Office in 1824, and retired probably around 1859 due to ill-health and was presented with a silver tea service costing about £150 and including the first known Gunn arms. This may have gone to Australia with his daughter Margaret as the silver service is last heard of in New Zealand. He was for forty years Vice Lieutenant[668] of the County of Sutherland. The 1861 census, after George's death, recorded that Margaret and her children Donald, Margaret and Elizabeth lived at Truro, Cornwall. Chief George Gunn and Margaret MacDonald had the following children -[669]

i. JESSIE[14] GUNN who was born 1825 in Assynt, Sutherland, Scotland. (Possibly Bessie or Elizabeth according to the 1896 tree). She died on 31 May 1887 in Devonport, Devon, England. She married firstly the Aberdeen educated lawyer JAMES ANDREW MILLER in Old Machar, Aberdeen. He was born about 1818 in Trinidad. He died[670] on 20 July 1853 at Jessie's parental house at Rhives, Sutherland. There was possibly issue from this marriage.[671] She married (2) REV. ARTHUR DIXON on 17 February 1858 in St. Mary's Truro, Cornwall, England with no issue.

ii. CHRISTINA MACDONALD[14] GUNN who was born 3 May 1826. She married[672] DONALD MACLEOD SMITH 1821-1916 in Truro, Cornwall 30 July 1860; he was born in Thurso. The marriage detail identifies her as the second daughter.[673] Donald was a barrister in Edinburgh and Sheriff-Substitute of Elgin. Christina Died 7 January 1883 at Friars Park, Elgin. They had five children.

iii. **CHIEF DONALD GUNN** who was born 15 February 1828. Following the death of Chief George Gunn in 1859 Donald was Chief until his death in 1863. He died without issue on 9 March 1863, in Truro, Cornwall, England. He was a land agent in the 1861 census. He probably worked for Viscount Falmouth. His mother Margaret was the Executrix of his will and she lived in Truro.

iv. **CHIEF HECTOR GUNN** who was born 12 October 1830 in Golspie. He married MARY ELIZABETH MACKILLIGAN[674] on 3 November 1863 in Bayswater, London. With the death of his brother Chief Donald in 1863 Hector became Chief of the Clan Gunn until his death. He was manager of the Agra Bank in Lahore.[675] He was at Lahore certainly in the years 1862 – 1870. He was a member of the Lahore Municipal Committee in 1870. He died without issue at Woodbine

[668] Page 421 (deaths), 'The Sydney Mail', 1 March 1884.
[669] It is possible that there was a 'Jannet' Gunn born 20 October 1824, more likely Jannet and Jessie are the same person.
[670] A death note gives Jessie as the 'eldest daughter' of George Gunn, Rhives. See http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/john-alexander-henderson/history-of-the-society-of-advocates-in-aberdeen-hci/page-24-history-of-the-society-of-advocates-in-aberdeen-hci.shtml accessed 4 September 2018.
[671] See http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/john-alexander-henderson/history-of-the-society-of-advocates-in-aberdeen-hci/page-24-history-of-the-society-of-advocates-in-aberdeen-hci.shtml accessed 4 September 2018.
[672] There is a suggestion that she married JOHN GORDON with at least one child; Jessie Gordon b. 1846, died Campbell Island, Mississippi, USA with descendants. I find this marriage markedly less convincing than the one given in the main text.
[673] https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=WfEIAAAAIAAJ&pg=PA316&dq=gunn+reverend+arthur+dixon&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjx_tD7w6HdAhXrAsAKHbGTApE4ChDoAQg7MAQ#v=onepage&q=gunn%20reverend%20arthur%20dixon&f=false accessed 4 September 2018.
[674] Her sister was Eliza(beth) Anne MacKilligan and her life details have been confused with Elizabeth Sutherland Gunn (sister of Chief Hector Gunn) on some publicly available family trees.
[675] There is a suggestion that he also served in Karachi but I can find only one secondary piece of evidence for that idea.

Cottage, Elgin, on 20 August 1874. Following his death the Clan Gunn Chief line from (11.31) George 'Dalfridh, Achsoriclate' Gunn became extinct and the Chiefship transferred to a descendant of George's younger brother (11.32) Alexander Dalnaglaton Gunn.[676]

v. MARGARET[14] GUNN was born about 1833 in Golspie, Sutherland, Scotland. She died in 1916 in Bowral, New South Wales, Australia. She married MALCOLM CHARLES MACHARDY in 31 December 1861 in St Kilda, Victoria, Australia. He was born in 1829 on the Isle of Skye, Inverness-shire. He held various agricultural runs in New South Wales, was a magistrate and was involved in banking businesses including being Manager of the Sydney branch of The London Chartered Bank of Australia. He attended at least two Governor's levees one in Victoria in 1863[677] and another in New South Wales in 1871[678] and presumably he attended other similar events. He died about 1891 in Kincardine, Ross and Cromarty. Margaret and Malcolm had three children. 1. Margaret Edith MacHardy[679] born 1862 in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Died 12 October 1871 Paddington, New South Wales, Australia. 2. Ronald MacHardy born 1866 in Paddington, New South Wales, Australia. Died in 1923 in Bowral, New South Wales, Australia. Dwi. 3. Mary Elizabeth MacHardy born 1870 in Double Bay, New South Wales, Australia. Died 7 August 1948. Dwi.

vi. ELIZABETH SUTHERLAND[14] GUNN was born in 1835. The 30 March 1851 census showed that Elizabeth's parents George and Margaret, her sisters Christina and Margaret and Elizabeth herself were lodging at Edinburgh, presumably they went to Edinburgh from Rhives for some brief reason (shopping?) as her sister Jessie and brother Hector are recorded at Rhives on that day. The 1861 census records Elizabeth at Truro. Elizabeth and her mother are both missing from the 1871 census. Elizabeth's mother - Margaret MacDonald (Gunn) – dies at Elgin in 1883. Elizabeth disappears from the records after 1861.[680] Impact? Elizabeth Gunn might have been a Chief of the Clan Gunn but then again she may not have been. Without further information she should be disregarded for Chiefship lists.

[676] There is a possibility that Chief Hector's youngest sibling Elizabeth Sutherland Gunn might have outlived him so, if she was unmarried, she should be regarded as a Clan Gunn Chief. The problem is she disappears from all records after the 1861 census.
[677] Page 6, 'Leader', Melbourne, 19 September 1863.
[678] Page 2, 'Evening News', Sydney NSW, 23 May 1871.
[679] Page 1224 *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser* 16 June 1894 records that at a Charity Ball 'Miss Machardy wore a scarf of the Gunn tartan, with the chieftain's crown; five cairngorm stones set in silver, forming a coronet, with a silver ring below. These badges are family heirlooms, treasured as highly as family diamonds, and having in one sense a higher value, as coming by descent, and not to be purchased. Long ago it was said 'The king can make many nobles, but he cannot make a chieftain…' Margaret Machardy certainly accepted that her father was Chief of the Clan Gunn. Did they own the previously mentioned silver tea service showing the first Clan Gunn coat of arms?
[680] This includes checking Australian records and newspaper reports. Elizabeth's sister Margaret went to Australia in 1861 after the census so it made possible sense for Elizabeth to go with her, she seems not to have so done.

PART FOUR B - 10.23 Margaret Gunn and her 2nd son's ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN GUNNS, PART FOUR B

7.8 William Beag Gunn c. 1561- . His descendants take over as Chief of the Gunns. Discussed in Part One. He had -
8.9 **Chief** Alexander Killernan Gunn c. 1590 – c. 1657. *Discussed in Part Two. He had 9.13 and 9.15 -*
9.13 **Chief** John Killernan Navidale Gunn c. 1636 –. *With children. All disappear from the records. Discussed in Part Two.*
9.15 **Chief** Donald Crotach Gunn c. 1642 – 1708. *Married. Descendants. Discussed in Part Three. He had -*
10.23 MARGARET GUNN. *Married. Descendants still with the continuing surname Gunn as such, the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. She had –*

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11.32 ALEXANDER OF DALNAGLATON GUNN 2nd son There are two descent lines from the Coroner for Alexander and his elder brother George (11,32) who started the legal Clan Gunn Chief line, previously discussed. One is from Margaret, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, the other is from John Gunn in Navidale and of Borroble, the second son of William Beag Gunn (7,8). For sake of clarity only the direct line from Chief Donald Crotach Gunn is given here. (Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) Alexander was born 7 January 1685. He died June 1765. He married JANET / JEAN MCLEOD OF DALNAHA on 10 August 1716. She was born 1 August 1695. Legally proved descent from this line to the author is discussed in the introduction and Appendices 1 and 2.

Alexander had six children. The first was -

12.37 JOHN 'DALNAGLATON BRAEHOUR' GUNN (Alexander Dalnaglaton[11], Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) and he was born on 21 June 1721. He died in 1810. He married MARJORIE 'ROWENS & HEMPRIGGS' DUNBAR on 2 July 1745 in Watten, Caithness, Scotland. She was born on 10 January 1727. As said elsewhere in this text there were many descendants[681] from John 'Dalnaglaton Braehour' Gunn but as time rolls on fewer are surnamed Gunn. John 'Dalnaglaton Braehour' Gunn and Marjorie 'Rowens & Hempriggs' Dunbar had many children. The more historically interesting descendants from 12.37 John Gunn are -

[681] John and Marjorie had eight children, those children had forty-one children and then the generations continue…

•13.48 Donald Braehour and Brawlbin Gunn. See next section for Braehour Gunns. He married Catherine Osclay Gunn who descended from Donald the Scholar Gunn, the third son of (7.8) William Beag Gunn. See pages 163- 167. *Donald had, amongst others -*

14.57 1st son John Gunn of Durness (1808 - 1885). *Line dies out of Gunns.*

14.58 2nd child Barbara Braehour Gunn. She marries Alexander Gunn. *See Chapter 13.*

•13.58 William Gunn of Braehour. He had, amongst many others, William Gunn of Waranga Basin, Victoria, Australia and the Honourable Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada, see Chapter 13.

Other siblings of (12,37) John Gunn were -

- **George (Dalnaglaton) Gunn d. 1800 / 1805? (12,38).** George Gunn may have had four children; 1) Betty who married her first cousin Alexander, son of Angus / Aeneas Gunn (12,39), 2) Janet who married John Sinclair of Reay with daughter Janet who seems to have married William Gunn in Braehour with children including William Gunn of Waranga Basin in Victoria, Australia (see Chapter 13) and the Hon. Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada (see Chapter 13). 3) Donald 'Dalnaglaton' Gunn who runs out of Gunn descendants and perhaps 4) 'Hester' Gunn d. 1785.

- **Angus / Aeneas Gunn (12,39)** with son Alexander who married Betty, see above. The line seems to have died out of Gunns by 1896.

- **Christian Gunn (12,40).** Marries James Gunn (Delgrate?) with son John Gunn of Dyke with daughter Kath (Catherine) of Campster who married John Gunn of Durness 1808 -1885 (14). John Gunn of Durness was the oldest son of Donald Braehour and Brawlbin (13,48).

- **Jean Gunn (12,41).** Married William Gunn. Their daughter Janet married into the Gunns of Braemore.

- **Margaret Gunn (12,42).** Margaret Gunn (12,42) married Robert Elder. It is through this 'Elder' line that Iain Gunn of Banniskirk claimed the Chiefship of the Clan Gunn in January 1984.

See Appendices 1 and 2 for more detail.

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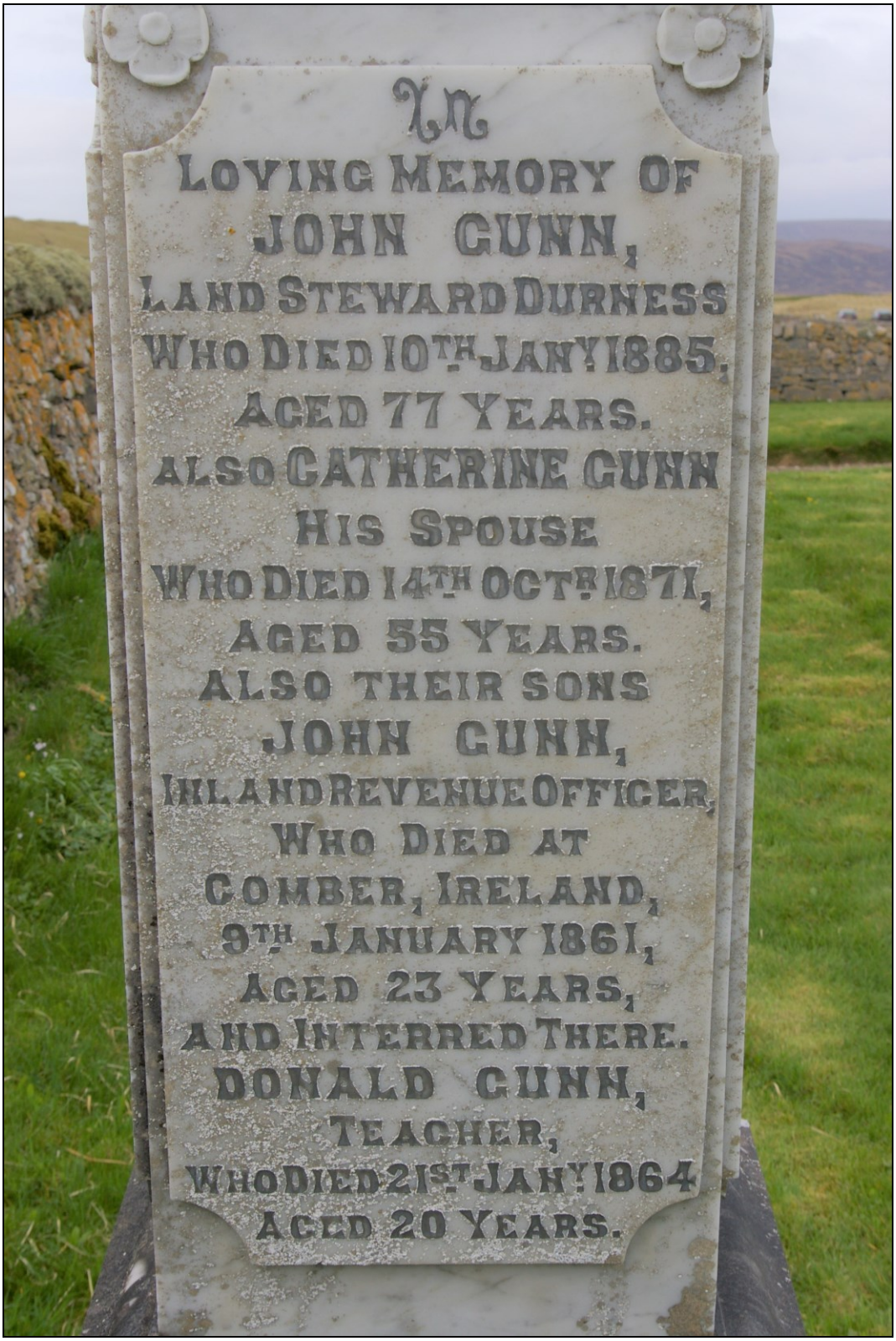
THE GUNNS OF BRAEHOUR

13.48 DONALD 'BRAEHOUR & BRAWLBIN' GUNN was born on 16 June 1765 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 3 January 1861 in Caithness, Scotland. He married 14. CATHERINE 'OSCLAY' GUNN daughter of 13. ALEXANDER 'OSCLAY' GUNN and BARBARA WEIR (WHEIR) on 3 March 1807 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She was born about 1782. She died in 1870. They had the following children.

14.57 JOHN 'DURNESS' GUNN was born 1808 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1885 in Durness, Sutherland, Scotland. He married 14. CATHERINE GUNN IN CAMPSTER in 1836. She was born about 1817 in Reay, Caithness, Scotland. She died in 1871 in Sutherland. Descendants, but they no longer have the surname Gunn. Catherine (Katherine?) Gunn (14) of Campster was the daughter of John Gunn of Dyke (13,53) whose mother was Christian Gunn (12,40) who married James Gunn 'Dalgate?' The line becomes extinct of surnamed Gunns. John Gunn and Catherine Gunn had the following children:

i. JOHN[14] GUNN was born in 1837 in Reay, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 9 January 1861 in County Carlow, Ireland.
ii. MARGARET[14] GUNN was born in 1841 in Carriside, Reay, Caithness, Scotland. She died on 28 September 1898 in Durness, Sutherland, Scotland.
iii. DONALD[14] GUNN was born in 1844 in Brawlbin, Reay, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 21 January 1864 Durness, Sutherland, Scotland.
iv. BARBARA[14] GUNN was born on 28 January 1847 in Carriside, Reay, Caithness, Scotland. She died on 3 November 1905 in Durness, Sutherland, Scotland.
V. JOHAN [14] GUNN was born in 1855 in Reay, Caithness, Scotland. She died on 11 October 1868 in Durness, Sutherland, Scotland.
vi. WILLIAMINA[14] GUNN was born on 19 November 1859 in Durness, Sutherland, Scotland. She died on 30 April 1950 in Scotland.
vii. ALEXANDER[14] MCKAY GUNN was born on 19 November 1859 in Durness, Sutherland, Scotland. He died on 11 May 1945 in Sangomore, Durness, Sutherland, Scotland. Descendants, who all died without issue. The last one to die was Marion Ellen Gunn 1899 – 26 August 1975.

So the line died out of Gunns.



The headstone commemorating John Gunn (14,57) and his family at Balnakeil cemetery, near Durness, 2011.

14.58 BARBARA 'BRAEHOUR' GUNN was born on 17 April 1810 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She died on 28 February 1844 in Caithness, Scotland. She married ALEXANDER 'BUALCHORK & BRAWLBIN' GUNN on 19 March 1829. He was born in 1789 in Caithness, Scotland. He died on 29 March 1847. Barbara 'Braehour' Gunn and Alexander 'Bualchork & Brawlbin' Gunn had the following children:

15. CATHERINE[15] GUNN was born in 1830 in Scotland. She died in Albert Park, Victoria, Australia in 1912. She married JAMES MILLER[682]. He was born in 1826. He died in 1918 in Australia. Descendants are alive in 2019 in Britain.

15. DONALD[15] GUNN was born on 28 March 1832 in Caithness, Scotland. He died on 14 February 1901 in Ballarat, Victoria, Australia. He married JANE SURMAN. They had ten children with many living descendants including the author. See the biography section pages 211 onwards. *My line.*

15 JANET[15] GUNN was born in 1834. She died in 1912 in Victoria, Australia. She married JOHN WATKINS SURMAN who died in Victoria, Australia. John was the brother of the above Jane Surman. They had nine children and have many living descendants.

15. JOHN[15] GUNN was born in 1836. He died in 1854.

15. WILLIAM[15] GUNN was born in 1839. He died in 1860.

14. MARY (MAY) GUNN was born in 1812 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She died in 1853 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She married JOHN CAMPBELL. He was born about 1815 in Reay, Caithness, Scotland. They had four children; Johan, Donald, William, John.

14.59 CAPT. ALEXANDER GUNN was born in 1814 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1900 in Thurso, Caithness, Scotland. He married MARY INNES CAMPBELL in 1841 in Caithness, Scotland. She was born in 1808 in Reay, Caithness, Scotland. She died in 1864 in Braehour. He was the creator of the 1896 Family Tree, see pages 84-86. They have descendants alive at the time of writing.

14. JEAN (JANE) GUNN was born 1816 in Braehour. She died in 1910 in Killimister, Caithness. She married HUGH MACKENZIE. He was born about 1802 in Farr, Sutherland. He died in 1870 in Winless, Caithness. *Descendants*.

14. WILLIAM GUNN was born in 1818. He died in 1838. Dwi.

14. MARGARET GUNN was born in 1819 in Caithness. She died in 1888 in Newton Watten, Caithness. She married JOHN MACKAY in 1860 in Brawlbin; I have not ascertained if he was linked to the other Mackays in this section. He was born about 1815 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1865 in Newton Watten, Caithness, Scotland.

[682] For an image of his ropeworks see https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-160891516/view accessed 31 July 2019.

14. ALEXANDRINA GUNN was born in 1825 in Halkirk, Caithness and died in 1876 in Dundee, Angus. She married DONALD 'BRAWLBIN & DUNDEE' GUNN in 1852 in Brawlbin. He was born about 1818 in Brawlbin. He died in 1879 in Dundee. Descendants

14. GEORGE GUNN?

13.49. 2nd son. WILLIAM GUNN was born in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1841. He married JANET SINCLAIR on 3 June 1780 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She was born on 22 February 1760 in Thurso, Caithness, Scotland. She died in 1841. Descendants.

13.49 WILLIAM GUNN was born in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1841. He probably married twice, including JANET SINCLAIR on 3 June 1780 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She was born on 22 February 1760 in Thurso, Caithness, Scotland. William Gunn had the following children.

14. ISABEL GUNN was born in 1780. She died in 1855.

14. BARBARA GUNN was born on 21 January 1791 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She died on 14 April 1863 in Latheron, Caithness, Scotland.

14. ELIZABETH GUNN was born in 17 November 1795 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland.

14. HON. DONALD 'CANADA' GUNN was born in September 1797 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 30 November 1878 in Manitoba, Canada.[683] See pages 189-195.

14. JOHN GUNN was born on 22 March 1800 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. Dwi.

14. MARJORY GUNN was born in 1803 in Braehour, Caithness, Scotland.

14. WILLIAM 'WARANGA VICTORIA AUSTRALIA' GUNN was born on 21 November 1804 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 22 October 1888 in Waranga, Victoria, Australia. He married CECILIA CORMACK on 26 July 1850 in Wick, Caithness, Scotland. She was born on 5 February 1820 in Wick, Caithness, Scotland. She died in Rushworth, Victoria, Australia. Descendants.[684] See pages 196-210.

14. JANET GUNN was born on 22 March 1806 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. Dwi.

14. ROBERT GUNN was born on 23 May 1807 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 3 May 1880 in Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. He may have married Janet Manson with children.

[683] For a biography of him see https://www.redriverancestry.ca/GUNN-DONALD-1797.php which also includes his children or http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gunn_donald_10E.html.
[684] For a further biography on him and for his son see William Gunn J.P. see http://www.cemeterymapping.net.au/Rushworth/Obituaries/William%20Gunn%20November%201921.pdf accessed 5 September 2018.

14. ALEXANDER GUNN was born on 12 September 1809 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 12 April 1868 in Dunbeath, Caithness, Scotland. Dwi.

13.50. JOHN GUNN was born in Dalnaglaton, Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1855 in Bualintagle, Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He married BARBARA GUNN. She died before 1855. Two children, no issue.

13.51. GEORGE GUNN, married MARGARET GUNN with issue.

13.51. **GEORGE GUNN** He married MARGARET GUNN; they had the following children -

14. WILLIAM GUNN was born about 1787. Dundee? Son Robert in Edinburgh, with sons.

14. ALEXANDER GUNN was born 1788 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1875 in Thurso, Caithness, Scotland. He married ANN WATERS in 1814 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She died before 1888. Many children.

14. REV. ANGUS GUNN was born in 1790 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland.

14. MARJORY GUNN was born in 1798 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland.

14. JOHN GUNN was born in 1803 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He died in 1855 in Thurso, Caithness, Scotland. He married MARGARET MACKENZIE in 1832 in Braehour. She was born about 1811. They had four children. 1. Angus Gunn born 1834. Died 15 April 1904 in Sydney, NSW, Australia. 2. Margaret Gunn born 1838. Died on 29 August 1909. She married EDWARD CUNNINGHAM. He was born in 1838 in Edinburgh, Scotland. 3. John Gunn born 1843. 4. Barbara Gunn. She died on 4 November 1887 in South Australia. She married JAMES TUCKER.

13.52. ANGUS GUNN. Farmer. He married ELIZABETH MATHESON on 12 December 1782 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. She was born in 1752 in Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. Issue, including some in India in 1896.

i. JEAN / JANE GUNN married JOHN MACGREGOR on 11 May 1769 in Wick, Caithness, Scotland. Her seniority is not accurately known; as a female it was traditionally not of importance. Issue.

ii. ALEXANDER GUNN. Did he exist? He may have died young. He is not mentioned in the 1896 tree.

12.38 GEORGE 'DALNAGLATON' GUNN 2nd son. (Alexander Dalnaglaton[11], Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]). He died in 1805. George 'Dalnaglaton' Gunn had the following children:

i BETTY GUNN who married her first cousin 12.39. ALEXANDER GUNN, son of ANGUS GUNN (13)
ii JANET GUNN. She married JOHN SINCLAIR of Reay.
iii DONALD 'DALNAGLATON' GUNN. He died in 1840.
iv HESTER / HESTOR GUNN. She died in 1785.

12.39 ANGUS / ANEAS GUNN 3rd son. (Alexander Dalnaglaton[11], Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) Angus Gunn had the following children:

i ALEXANDER GUNN. He married his first cousin BETTY GUNN daughter of GEORGE 'DALNAGLATON' GUNN (12,38). Died 1830. Issue.
ii GEORGE GUNN. Dwi

12.40 CHRISTIAN GUNN (Alexander Dalnaglaton[11], Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) Her exact seniority is unknown. She married **JAMES GUNN**. Christian Gunn and James Gunn had the following child:

13.53 JOHN 'DYKE' GUNN. *See 14.57 John (Durness) Gunn.*

12.41 JEAN GUNN (Alexander Dalnaglaton[11], Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) She married WILLIAM GUNN. Jean Gunn and William Gunn had at least the following child:

i JANET GUNN. She married UNKNOWN (William?) MACKAY of Braemore. Janet Gunn and Unknown Mackay and had the following children, James, Alexander, Donald and John. Mark Rugg Gunn[685] recounts a story about her – *'Alexander Gunn a farmer of Dalganachan …died of a fever in 1786 at the age of 28 and was buried in Dirlot cemetery. He was at the time engaged to be married to Janet Gunn of the MacHamishes of Kildonan, a renowned beauty … Janet, however, did not die an old maid, she married William Mackay, a farmer of Braelaid, Braemore and had a large family.'* Note that even Mark Rugg Gunn here uses MacHamish to indicate a specific family, it is not a singular title.

[685] Page 204, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

12.42 MARGARET GUNN (Alexander Dalnaglaton[11], Margaret Gunn[10], Donald Crotach[9], Alexander 'Killernan'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]). She married ROBERT ELDER. Margaret Gunn and Robert Elder had the following child:

i JOHN ELDER. Descendants.

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PART FIVE - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's descent line through his second son 8.10 John in Navidale of Borrobol to 9.16 George to 10.24 John who married 10.23 Margaret daughter of 9.15 Chief Donald Crotach

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN GUNNS, PART FIVE

7.8 William Beag Gunn, had
8.10 JOHN IN NAVIDALE OF BORROBOL GUNN, *had*
9.16 GEORGE 'BORROBOL' GUNN *had, amongst others*
10.24 JOHN 'BORROBOL, KINBRACE FARM, RUMSDALE, GRIMACHARY' GUNN who married
10.23 Margaret Gunn, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach, see Parts Four A and Four B.

8.10 JOHN IN NAVIDALE OF BORROBOL GUNN (William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1591. Alive 1652.

The John Gunn (8,10) who was brother to Alexander (8,9) is poorly known; he was, as already noted, not the grandson of William Mhor (8) but a son of William Beag (7,8). He must not be confused with his nephew John Gunn (9,13), the senior son of Alexander (8,9).

As already discussed, John (8,10) was 'in' Navidale' in 1620 when he committed criminal activity. The 1624 document about the 1620 violence lists John (8,10), then Alexander (8,9). This is the reason John (8,10) has been viewed as the senior of the two brothers as shown by Mark Rugg Gunn[686] who wrote of the 1624 document that *'This would seem to support the suggestion that John followed William Mhor…'*. As already discussed, the wrong William is suggested here; it's really William Beag (7,8) not William Mhor (8). It is not clear whether John (8,10) or Alexander (8,9) was technically senior; it is however clear that Alexander (8,9) took over Killernan which makes it reasonable to assume that Alexander (8,9) was the eldest son of William Beag (8,9).

A 1649 Act[687] of Parliament mentioned John Gunn (8,10) of Borrobol. The 'of' is important as it is a significant legal document; he is part of a major committee with his brother, they are both respected figures. And the 'of' shows it was his estate, not a part of Killernan. He was, as mentioned in the previous entry, alive in 1652. The 1652 document has the senior MacHamish at Killernan, being Alexander (8,9), and the next senior line John MacHamish (8,10) *'of Borrobill'*.

John (8,10) and Alexander (8,9) are certainly brothers; as discussed in the preceding section on Alexander (8,9) the Sutherland Estate papers make it logical to assume so. Alexander (8,9) presumably moved from Borrobol to take over Killernan when that became available (presumably after William Mhor's (8) death or incapacity), then it is reasonable to assume the next senior Gunn - John (8,10) – moved into Borrobol.

[686] Page 167. Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[687] *Charles I: Translation; 1649, 4 January, Edinburgh, Parliament; Parliamentary Register; 15 February 1649; Legislation; Act for putting the kingdom in a posture of defence; 1649/1/133* . Pages 84-85, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

It has been suggested[688] that John (8,10) married Catherine / Katherine Sinclair, daughter of Francis Sinclair fiar of Dun. This is an error, Catherine married John Gunn of Killernan (9,13) as I discuss in his life.

John in Navidale of Borrobol Gunn had at least the following child:

9.16. GEORGE 'BORROBOL' GUNN born about 1639.

9.16 GEORGE 'BORROBOL' GUNN (John in Navidale of Borrobol[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]).

George (9,16) was the son of John (8,10) in Navidale, of Borrobol. George Gunn of Borrobol is generally wrongly placed in Gunn history / genealogy as a younger brother of (9.15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn - this comes from a reference on page 11 and in the genealogical postscript saying the Rev Sage 1801 manuscript saying Donald had a brother George. This seems wrong as I explain in this life. I also note the Reverend Sage manuscript includes, towards the end, a later handwritten note saying about the Process of heirship obtained by (12.36) Mr (Chief) Hector that 'one error seems to be committed … (13.56) Robert Gunn of Achanakin (*sennachy*)… that he know NO Brother of Donald Gunn George from whom some witness deponed was the first ancestor of (12.36 Chief) Hector Gunn.' I agree totally – as shown by my placement of George Gunn here.

One needs to consider the Borrobol estate; Alexander (8,9) was in Borrobol by 1617 before he became of Killernan. He was probably there when his uncle William Mhor (8) was in charge of Killernan – William Mhor (8) as already detailed, died without known issue. Alexander's (8,9) brother John (8,10) was certainly *'of Boroble'* by 1649 - and probably much earlier - as he was the next senior Gunn branch once Alexander (8,9) became of Killernan. It seems therefore that Borrobol was originally the Estate used by – but separate from - the senior MacHamish Gunn after the MacHamish of Killernan Gunn. The second senior MacHamish family, if you like. It is not clear when Borrobol went into Gunn hands and I suspect it may have left Gunn hands around 1811 when Borrobol Gunns are recorded as part of the Red River Settlement of Canada.

John Gunn of Killernan (9,13) borrowed the huge amount of two thousand Scottish merks from George Gunn of Borrobol (9,16) by 1679. Presumably the money had gone to the Borrobol estate over many years in some form; rent from tenants. perhaps. Now, if one accepted the traditional myth[689] that George Gunn of Borrobol (9,16) was the younger brother of Donald Crotach (9,15) then George Gunn (9,16) would somehow have been in charge at Borrobol and somehow earned huge amounts of money even though he had to be born a decade or so (to allow for the siblings supposedly between them) *after* his supposed eldest brother John Gunn of Killernan (9,13) who borrowed the money from him. That's not logical. What does work is that George Gunn of Borrobol (9,16) was first cousin to John Gunn of Killernan (9,13) with his own independent wealth, the Borrobol Estate.

[688] Page 167, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[689] Pages 166 and 269, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* for example. The 1896 tree has a slightly different version to Mark Rugg Gunn's interpretation but neither is accurate.

George Gunn of Borrobol (9,16) was an important Gunn MacHamish figure as from his family descendants a Chief of the Clan Gunn was found when one was needed to satisfy the massively wealthy and dominant landowner of the Highlands namely the Duchess of Sutherland in the early 1800s - his descendant Hector Gunn (12,36) was made Chief of the Clan Gunn in 1803.[690] See Appendix 3. Hector's son George Gunn (13,60), became 'Chief' in 1814 and George (13,47) was member Number 1 of the Clan Gunn Society of the time. Letters from the society to him make it clear that he was viewed as the Head of the 'Clan Gunn'.[691] As well *'Hector Gunn, chief of the clan Gunn, who was father of George, the present chieftain, factor*[692] *on the Sutherland Estate, who led the men of Sutherland to Edinburgh, and appeared at their head when King George IV visited that city in 1821.'*[693] After Chief George came Chief Donald followed by Chief Hector.

In Thomas Sinclair's view *'It must be fully accepted, on the legal and state evidence now produced, that George Gunn* (13,47)*, factor Rhives,*[694] *was the true representative of the Kildonan valley, it does not necessarily follow that he was chief of all the Gunns, even though thus proved the head of the eldest branch of the ruling house.'*[695] Incidentally the earliest known use of the Clan Gunn Chief invented coat of arms can be found on the tea-set donated by the Duchess of Sutherland to George (13,47) – it now is in New Zealand.

Lord Lyon accepted this line's MacHamish descent – although inaccurately - as he writes *'the descent of no. 37 Hector Gunn in Thurso (*12,36), *served heir-male in 1803, through his father no 35. George Gunn* (11,31) *and grandfather no 35 John Gunn* (10,24) *… to his great grandfather no 34 George Gunn of Borrobol* (9,16), *younger son of no. 6 Alexander 5th Mackeamish'*[696] (the Alexander is wrong – George (9,16) was son of John in Navidale of Borrobol (8,10). Living American descendants[697] are known from Chief George Gunn (13,47) but not through a direct male line. Even if one accepted Lord Lyon's view it still means this descent from the Coroner is accepted, just from a slightly different way to that detailed in this text.

But this George Gunn of Borrobol line has not been properly explored. Lord Lyon has accepted that George Gunn of Borrobol's male line to Factor George had died out but that is not the sole line; George had a younger grandson Alexander (11,32) from whom there are many descendants including the Braehour line one of whom (John 10,24) - Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, Grimachary) married Margaret (10,23) daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) from which line I descend**.** The marriage to Margaret is why the traditional Clan Gunn Chief line has not died out. The Hon. Donald Gunn[698] of Manitoba, Canada (and others) (being from William Gunn 13,48) – and his many

[690] Thomas Sinclair Supplements in the 'Northern Ensign, 4th Instalment 23.12.1902. '*In 1803 Hector Gunn Thurso, was by legal inquisition, 31st May, made chief of the clan.'*
[691] See pages 170-174, Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns.*
[692] A factor is a person who manages an Estate for a landowner.
[693] Being a quote from R. Mackay's *History of the House of Mackay* in Thomas Sinclair Supplements in the 'Northern Ensign, 5th instalment, 30.12.1902.
[694] 'Rhives' was the Sutherland Estate's Factor's House near Golspie; pages 168 -172 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*.
[695] Page 175, Thomas Sinclair. *The Gunns*. Page 168 notes a letter from Lord Lyon's office 13 August 1803 saying that Hector Gunn – the above George Gunn's father – was *'now the chief of the clan Gunn'.*
[696] http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/files/Gunn,%20Michael%20James%20-%20Interlocutor%20and%20Note.pdf accessed 28 March 2013.
[697] See http://clangunn.weebly.com/thomas-sinclair-supplement-8-2011903.html accessed 9 August 2019.
[698] For a brief life see http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gunn_donald_10E.html accessed 11 April 2018.

descendants - is also from this Borrobol line. The idea that the George Gunn of Borrobol's line (9,16) is extinct is wrong.

One of George's son was John[699] (10,24) of Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale and Grimachary. This John (10,24) had two sons George Gunn (11,31) Dalfridh, Achsoriclate and Alexander Dalnaglaton (11,32) and he may have had an illegitimate son Captain? Lieutenant? John Gunn who served in a variety of campaigns[700] with the 12th Regiment of Foot.[701]

Other MacHeorish / Borrobol sons mentioned in the Sutherland Estate 1738 papers are Robert Gunn and Donald Gunn. These are not central to the Chief line so have not been followed. There are stories of 'the beauty of Caithness' type attached to a daughter of Jean Gunn (13) namely *'Janet Gunn of the M'Hamishes of Kildonan'*[702] who married William Mackay farmer of Braelaid, Braemore, 12 September 1787. Her descendants continued on the farm after her death. This Janet Gunn, the 1896 tree suggests, is a great, great grand-daughter of George Gunn (9,16) of Borrobol.

Descendants of George Gunn of Borrobol are 'MacHeorish' Gunns – sons of George. This supports why 'MacHamish' Gunn is not a title, but an indicator of a branch f the family Gunn. The Gunns of Borrobol continued as probably the senior branch of the Borrobol line. Surely the senior branch stayed at the Family Estate? – these Gunns of Borrobol are recorded going to the Red River Settlement in Canada in 1813 and can be found on the internet.

To summarise, George 'Borrobol' Gunn had the following children:

10.24 JOHN 'BORROBOL, KINBRACE FARM, RUMSDALE, GRIMACHARY' GUNN. He married Margaret Gunn, see the preceding entry. He and his brothers Robert and Donald (both following) had sublet part of the Badanloch Estate 'owned' by Chief Donald Crotach Gunn some time before 1709. For full details of John see the biography of Margaret Gunn, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, in Section 4a, Pages 152-158. Many descendants. *This is the ongoing, traditional Clan Gunn Chief line.*

ii. Robert Gunn (one source[703] says he died 1752 without issue after serving in the British Artillery.)

iii. Donald Gunn

iv. At least one other sibling stayed on the Borrobol Estate. Borrobol Gunns emigrated to the Red River Settlement in Canada and their descendants can be traced. This 'other sibling' may have been the senior Borrobol given he stayed at the main property.[704] Two siblings? Perhaps William and George?[705]

[699] This son is sometimes said to be 'of Kinbrace'; that is wrong. The Kinbrace estate was held by the Gunns who descended from William Beag until 1714 (Sutherland Estate Folio 218 / MS deposit 313/208). The next reference for Kinbrace is in 1734 when it was held by the Wilson family of London. See also the Sage manuscript in the Wick archives for Captain Gunn.
[700] Pages 164-167, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns.*
[701] The 1896 tree.
[702] Thomas Sinclair *'Northern Ensign'* Gunn Supplement 12, 17 December 1903. And see http://greyhenswell.blogspot.co.uk/2016/04/the-strong-man-rambling-recollections.html accessed 9 July 2019. For a mythic version, see 'The Strong Man of Dalnaglaton' chapter in Robert P Gunn's *Tales from Braemore.*
[703] The archive of Captain Gunn, 'Sage Manuscript' year 1801, Wick Archives.
[704] This detail is from a 23 September 1738 Sutherland Estate document held in the National Library of Scotland.
[705] Captain Gunn archive – 'Sage Manuscript 1801', Wick Archives.

PART SIX - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's descent lines through his third son 8.11 Donald 'the Scholar' to Kinbrace, Mulbuie, Osclay Gunns and more

SUMMARY

7.8 William Beag had
8.11 Donald the Scholar of Kinbrace had
9.17 William Kinbrace Gunn, had
10.35 Adam Kinbrace Gunn, had
11.33 William Kinbrace Gunn had
12.42 Adam Mulbuie Gunn *and*
12.45 John Houstry Dunbeath Gunn had
13. Alexander Osclay Gunn had
14. Catherine Osclay Gunn who married
13.48. Donald Braehour and Brawlbin Gunn. *Donald is a descendant of 10.23 Margaret Gunn, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, being the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. See Parts Four A and Four B.*

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8.11 DONALD 'SCHOLAR OF KINBRACE' GUNN (William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1592.

William Beag (7,8) had at least four sons; the elder sons Chief Alexander (8,9) and John (8,10) take over at Killernan and Borrobol after the death of William Mhor (8) without children and have already been discussed.

William Beag (7,8) also had Donald the Scholar (8,11) and William of Acheneccan (8,12). I suspect this is the right order due to the logic that the more senior sons would take over the main properties of Killernan and Borrobol. The third son Donald the Scholar had the money to buy the wadset of Kinbrace (*Kinbrays* in the Sutherland estate documents of the time) and the final son William seemed to have lived at Acheneccan (Achneakin) which was a minor part of the Kinbrace Estate in 1810 and I suspect earlier.[706] The 1896 Tree suggests that Badanloch may also have been part of Donald's lands (or at least his descendants' lands) – this may, or may not, be accurate.

Importantly Donald Gunn the Scholar owned the Achentoul Estate when he took over the Kinbrace Estate in 1638 (Sutherland Estate documents show this) and there is no record of him – or any other Gunn – resigning the property. The 1896 Tree records six generations of Gunns owning the property. Were these also part of Donald Gunn's family? Achentoul is important as (10.23) Margaret Gunn,

[706] Page xlvi, ed. R.J. Adam, *Papers on Sutherland Estate Management 1802-1816, Vol. 1.*

daughter of (9.15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn, married John Gunn (10,24). The record for her husband has him (and perhaps them) living at Kinbrace Farm and Grimachary which were both part of the Achentoul Estate – did the extended family look after its relatives. See 10.23 Margaret Gunn.

It is the descendants of Donald the Scholar (8,11) and William of Acheneccan (8,12) which have been confused or wrongly placed in many previous family trees and histories.

William Beag's (7,8) third son was Donald the Scholar of Kinbrace[707] (8,11) who had –

- William Gunn of Kinbrace (9,17) who had
- Adam Gunn of Kinbrace (10,25) d. 1700? who had
- William Gunn (11,33) Houstry Dunbeath d 1740 - who gave up Kinbrace – had three sons,
    - Adam Mulbuie Houstry (12,43) d 1776 and from whom came Rev Robert Gunn of Latheron with much issue),
    - Robert (12,44) with issue.
    - John Houstry Dunbeath (12,45) d 1780.
        - Alexander (13) farmer at Osclay who had many children including
            - Catherine (14) who married Donald Gunn of Braehour and Brawlbin (13,48). There were many descendants, see the entry for Donald Gunn (13,48), this is the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line.

Proof? Sutherland Estate documents in the National Library of Scotland
The Kinbrace Estate ownership is clearly shown in Sutherland Estate documents[708] held in the National Library of Scotland. This means we have primary source proof, as these documents are legal documents of the time, of the following –

1. Donald Gunn (8,11) was of Kinbrace by August 1638. He was called Donald the Scholar possibly ironically; his signature of *'D Gune'* is followed by *'in my hand'*.
2. His son was William Gunn (9,17) of Kinbrace who also gained the lands of Achnahow in 1658. He was still of Kinbrace in 1672. His wife may have been Anna Cordover. He may have been 'in Knockfinn' before becoming 'of Kinbrace'.
3. Adam Gunn (10,25) was son of William (9,17) of Kinbrace by 1678. He has been missing from the history texts. Dead by 1709? [709]

[707] Donald the Scholar (8,11) had a wadset contract for Kinbrace drawn with the Earl of Sutherland; it is in the NLS.
[708] The NLS documents are
1) A 1638 Folio 208 MS Deposit 313 / 302. This document has a Donald Gunn in Kinbrays (Kinbrace) in August 1638. It is signed by Donald Gunn - signed *'Gune'* with the addition of *'in my own hand'*. This delight in literacy supports the idea he was 'Donald the Scholar'.
2) A 1658 Folio 208 MS Deposit 313 / 303. This document shows William Gunn of Kinbrace also took on Achnahow of Kildonan in 1658.
3) A 1672 Folio 208 MS Deposit 313 / 204. This document has William Gunn of Kinbrace in 1672.
4) A 1672 Folio 208 MS Deposit 313 / 206. This document clearly states that Adam Gunn was of Kinbrace in 1672, that *'William Gun of Kinbrace, my father'* and *'Donald my grandfather'*.
5) A 1709 Folio 208 MS Deposit 313 / 207. This document shows that the Adam Gunn of Kinbrace fathered William Gunn.
6) A 1714 Folio 208 MS Deposit 313 / 208. This document is a discharge by William Gunn in Knockfinn to Lord Strathnaver of the lands of Kinbrace and Achnahow. It says he is *'lawful son of Adam Gunn'* and that *'William Gunn my grandfather'*.

4. William Gunn (11,33) was son of the above Adam Gunn (10,25). He gave up (*'discharge'*) the wadset of Kinbrace and Achnahow[710] in 1714.[711] His wife was probably Anna Sutherland.[712] They did not get on well, was this was the cause of giving up the estate – a divorce, perhaps, in all but name?

So the Kinbrace ownership using National Library of Scotland documents was definitely Donald Gunn (8,11) – William Gunn (9,17) – Adam Gunn (10,25) – William Gunn (11,33) who gave up Kinbrace.[713]

There is also support for much of the preceding in the Wick archives of Captain Gunn.

By 1812 a Lieutenant William Gunn[714] had the wadset of the Kinbrace, Shinachy, Achneakan and Achnahow Estate but his family is not known.

The 1896 tree

The 1896 tree is, as already stated, by Captain Gunn Braehour (14,59), an acknowledged Clan Gunn historian[715] and son of Donald Gunn (13,48) the sennachy of the Clan. Of real significance – as it shows his lack of bias – in that when this tree was written there was no idea that the female Gunn line was of any potential importance. This tree has three Kinbrace owners in the order given by the NLS Sutherland Estate papers - namely William (9,17) 1650; who had son Adam Gunn (10,25) *'Badanloch Kildonan and Kinbrace'* 1709 (the date matching the Sutherland Estate document) who had William (11,33) who gave up Kinbrace. The tree has an extra generation of an Adam after Donald the Scholar (8,11). No other Gunn history / genealogy gives this Adam any support so the Adam after Donald the Scholar (8,11) seems unlikely. Even if this extra Adam was correct the descent from Donald the Scholar (8,11) would still apply.

Living Memory

The 1896 tree shows the Captain's mother was Catherine Gunn of Osclay (14) (who married Donald Gunn (13,48) of Braehour) and that she was the eldest child of Alexander Gunn of Osclay (13).

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[709] Page 126 Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns* has *William 'Gun' of Kinbrace was served heir general to his father Adam Gunn of Kinbrace 7 July 1709.'* .So Sinclair supports the document in the National Library of Scotland and provides the approximate death date for Adam Gunn.

[710] As already discussed, the estate in 1809-1820 also included Shinachy and Achneakans (Acheneccan); did it include these earlier? Page xlvi, ed. by R.J. Adam *Papers on Sutherland Estate Management Volume 1.*

[711] Page 126, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

[712] See page 149, Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*. Both Thomas Sinclair and Mark Rugg Gunn have a story about the end of Kinbrace which does not match the NLS document. Kinbrace ends in what would have been a messy divorce if such was available at the time. But *'Sutherland'* is mentioned in both.

[713] The following is inaccurate but does have the NLS ownership list of Donald – William – Adam - William clearly stated; Thomas Sinclair 'Supplement 30', 14. 7. 1903, where he repeats 'Sage's manuscript' *From William M'Hamish, the son of James the coroner, were descended two sons, both of them being called William, being by two marriages. The first was called Big William, and the second Little William. The latter were the ancestors of the Gunns of Kinbrace. These formed two branches, the Gunns of Melbuie and Achanakin. The son of Little William, ancestor of the Melbuie family or branch, was Donald the Scholar, whose posterity were William,* ***Donald, William, Adam, William,*** *Adam, and Rev. William and Rev. Robert Minister of Latheron. The other branch of the Kinbrace family is Achinikin. Their ancestor was Donald the Scholar's son William, who was followed by Donald, William, William, Robert, William, Robert a venerable aged man, and ordained an elder in Achanakin, parish of Kildonan. Little William or his son Donald wadsetted the lands of Kinbrace for 500 pounds Scots...*

[714] Page 103, ed. R.J. Adam, *Papers on Sutherland Estate Management 1802-1816 Volume 1.*

[715] As mentioned - *Captain Gunn, Braehour ... is admitted to be, if not the greatest, at least a genuine, living authority on Gunn questions ... It were strange if the captain had not been well posted up in all historic points, seeing that his father, Donald Gunn, Braehour, was the acknowledged sennachy or historian of his time ... an unusually learned sennachy.* Pages 185-186 Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

(Further Osclay descendants, as well as the Gunn who wrote the 1868 tree and 1870 tree, possibly include the Australian pioneer writer Mrs Aeneas Gunn[716] who was probably married to an Osclay Gunn.) This Alexander Gunn (13) of Osclay's father was John 'Houstry and Dunbeath' Gunn (12,45) who was at one time 'in Kinbrace'.

Other

At various times and various places Mulbuie Gunns are shown with descent from Donald the Scholar (8,11) – there was obviously strong belief that Mulbuie Gunns were of importance. Mark Rugg Gunn[717] has *'Adam of Milbuie'* being the oldest son of Donald the Scholar (8,11). This probably reflected Thomas Sinclair[718] who had this view (and this is not from the 'Appendix' section where he used, in effect, the 1868 / 1870 trees so his source for his Mulbuie view was from elsewhere). The 1868 / 70 tree also has the view that Adam *'Milbuie'* was a son of Donald the Scholar (8,11).

Now the identification of Mulbuie Gunn with Donald Gunn the scholar (8,11) is correct but the Adam is in the wrong generation. Donald's son was William 'Kinbrace' Gunn (9,17) - Adam Gunn of Mulbuie is Adam 'Houstry' Gunn (12,43) who is clearly identified as 'of Mulbuie' in *The Book of Lybster*[719] which then identified a son as the Rev. Robert Gunn (13,54) with many children. Adam (12,43) had two Reverends as sons; one feels a religious family with a sense of family history and of local importance, especially so for the Rev. Robert Gunn (13,54) – see his life - hence the attachment of 'Mulbuie Gunns' to Donald the Scholar's line. Again, Donald the Scholar's line is not extinct.

Thomas Wilson takes over Kinbrace in 1735. Other Gunns take it over after him, notably the Leveson – Gower - Gunn family one of whom was a 'Chief of Clan Gunn' claimant in the 1960s to early 1970s. Donald 'Scholar of Kinbrace' Gunn had at least the following child:

9.17. WILLIAM 'KINBRACE'[9] GUNN.

9.17 WILLIAM 'KINBRACE' GUNN (Donald 'Scholar of Kinbrace'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1])

For further information on William (9,17) see the Donald the Scholar (8,11) discussion. William 'Kinbrace' Gunn probably married Anna Cordover[720] and they had the following child:

10.25. ADAM 'KINBRACE'[10] GUNN who died in 1709.

10.25 ADAM 'KINBRACE' GUNN (William 'Kinbrace'[9], Donald 'Scholar of Kinbrace'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) probably died in 1709.

[716] See the 'Australian Dictionary of Biography' entry on her at http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gunn-jeannie-6506 .
[717] Page 270, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*.
[718] Pages 120-121, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[719] Page 204, D. A. Young. *The Book of Lybster*.
[720] NLS document 208 Deposit 313/208.

Adam (10,25) was the son of William of Kinbrace (9,17) who was the son of Donald the Scholar (8,11) of Kinbrace. He died in 1709. For more information on this line see Donald the Scholar (8,11) of Kinbrace.

Adam 'Kinbrace' Gunn had the following child:

11.33 WILLIAM 'KINBRACE HOUSTRY DUNBEATH' GUNN (Adam 'Kinbrace'[10], William 'Kinbrace'[9], Donald 'Scholar of Kinbrace'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) He may have died in 1740.

William (11,33) was the son of Adam 'Kinbrace' Gunn (10,25). They descended from Donald the Scholar of Kinbrace's (8,11) line; for detail of William's (11,33) life see Donald's biography. William (11,34) died in 1740.

He probably had four children –

1) Adam 'Houstry' Gunn (12,43). (William 'Kinbrace Houstry Dunbeath'[11], Adam 'Kinbrace'[10], William 'Kinbrace'[9], Donald 'Scholar of Kinbrace'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) He may have died in 1776. Adam (12,43), the first son, is referred to in *The Book of Lybster*[721] as 'Adam C. Gun' tacksman of Mulbuie;[722] Adam of Mulbuie has been wrongly placed as the first son of Donald Gunn the Scholar of Kinbrace (8,11) in both main Gunn histories and the 1868/69 family trees.[723] As said, Adam (12,43) was actually the great, great grandson of Donald the Scholar of Kinbrace (8,11). Adam 'Houstry' – and of Mulbuie - Gunn had the following children:

> * **the Reverend Robert Gunn**[724] 1775 – 1860, three wives, many children. (13,54) *ROBERT GUNN, ... son of Adam G., tacksman of Mulbuie, Dunbeath ; was tutor in the family of Sinclair of Dunbeath ; licen. by Presb. of Caithness 27th Feb. 1775; ord. 27th Sept. that year ; died 29th Nov. 1819. He marr. (1) 6th June 1778, Mary (died 8th Nov. 1784), daugh. of David Henderson of Stemster, and had issue—Cecilia, born 28th July 1780, died 26th Feb. 1811 ; Adam, born 11th May, died 5th Aug. 1783 ; David, born 19th Aug. 1784, died 5th Feb. 1785: (2) 1st Sept. 1787, Louisa (died 22nd May 1794), daugh. of Colonel Clunes, Crakaig, and had issue—Mary, born 30th Sept. 1788 ; Gordon, born 26th Dec. 1789, died 4th March 1790 ; William, born 30th Dec. 1790 ; Gordon, born 8th May 1792 ; John Hugh, born 14th March 1794 : (3) 31st Aug. 1798, Elizabeth Gun, Forres, who died at Dunbarton, 6th Nov. 1843, and had issue — Thomas, min. of Keiss, born 11th Oct. 1800; Adam, min. of Hope Street Gaelic Church, Glasgow, born 7th Aug. 1802 ; Louisa, born 26th Oct. 1803, died at Greenock, 27th Dec. 1854; Margaret, born 2nd April 1805 ; Robert, born 5th April 1806, died 27th Feb. 1818; James, born 29th Aug. 1807 ; Cecilia, born 8th March 1811 ; Eliza, born 2nd July 1813; William Gordon, born 14th April*

[721] Page 204, D. A. Young, *The Book of Lybster*.
[722] Page 204, D. A. Young, *ibid*.
[723] See page 270, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* and pages 120-121, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[724] 'Gun' on Page 204, D. A. Young, *The Book of Lybster*.

1815; John Arthur, born 11th Nov. 1816, died 7th March 1869. Publication—Account of the Parish (Sinclair's Stat. Ace, xvii.).[725]

The above is accurate but dry as dust. *The Book of Lybster*[726] is more concerned with the man; it records him as *'a shrewd legally-minded man with much force of character but not very popular as a preacher…* (he had) *nicknames of Robbie-na-process and Robert McProcess… Mr Gunn prosecuted … for repairs to the church and manse and also for fines imposed by the session … children of* (his) *… three marriages were residing at one time with the third wife at the Manse…'*

I suspect the Reverend Robert (13,54) – or his father Adam (12,43) - knew his Gunn genealogy well and had the profession to make it known in the area but given the oral nature of the time the idea that Adam Mulbuie Gunn (12,43) descended from the son of Donald the Scholar of Kinbrace (8,11) blurred over time into Adam Mulbuie Gunn being the son of Donald the Scholar of Kinbrace (8,11).

Amongst the Children of the Reverend Robert Gunn (13,54) was the Reverend Thomas Gunn –

THOMAS GUNN, born 11th Oct. 1800, son of Robert G., min. of Latheron; educated at King's College, Aberdeen, M.A. (March 1818) and Univ. of Edinburgh; elected schoolmaster of Latheron'in 1819; licen. by Presb. of Caithness 19th July 1827; pres. by George IV. 13th July, and ord. 29th Sept. 1829. Joined the Free Church in 1843; min. of Free Church, Madderty, 21st Aug. 1844-86 ; died 8th March 1886. He marr. 11th Jan. 1830, Helen S. Innes Gunn, and had issue — Robert, born 31st Aug. 1833 ; Helen Innes, born 15th April 1843.[727]

The Reverend Robert Gunn (13,54) also had the Reverend Adam Gunn A.M. – born 7 August 1802 and who worked as Minister of Hope Street Gaelic Church in Glasgow in 1851.

2) Adam 'Houstry' Gunn (12,43) also had the **Reverend William Gunn** (13) b. 1776 -

WILLIAM GUNN, son of Adam G., tacksman of Milbuie, Dunbeath; educated at King's College, Aberdeen; M.A. (28th March 1771); schoolmaster of Tongue ; licen. by Presb. of Tongue 25th Oct. 1774 ; pres. by tutors of Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, in Feb., and ord. 15th Aug. 1776 ; died 28th Dec. 1785, aged about 34, one of the most popular preachers in the North. He marr. 9th July 1779, Anne (died senior annuitant of Ministers' Widows' Fund 3rd July 1841), daugh. of David Henderson of Stemster, and had issue — Cecilia, born 16th June 1780, died 14th Nov. 1785; Adam, born 18th Jan. 1782; Mary, born 14th Nov, 1784.[728]

Stories exist about his godliness; his death was supposedly due to witches. Robert (13,54) and William married sisters.[729]

[725] Page 126, H. Scott, D.D., *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae: The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation.* The 1896 tree has a different order for the children who reach adulthood.
[726] Page 204, D. A. Young, *The Book of Lybster*.
[727] Page 124, H. Scott, D.D., *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae: The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation.*
[728] Page 128, H. Scott, D.D., *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae…*
[729] Being from 'Notes of my Family History' by the Rev. George Sutherland. Minister of the United Free Church, Mull. 1903/1909.

3) Two further children of 13.54. Adam Houstry Mulbuie Gunn were

ii **REV. WILLIAM 'GOLSPIE'[13] GUNN** was born in 1776. Dwi.
iii **ANN[13] GUNN.** She married ALEXANDER CAMPBELL. Canada.

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12.44 ROBERT GUNN was the younger brother of Adam Houstry Mulbuie Gunn (William 'Kinbrace Houstry Dunbeath'[11], Adam 'Kinbrace'[10], William 'Kinbrace'[9], Donald 'Scholar of Kinbrace'[8], William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) Robert Gunn had the following child:

13.55 WILLIAM GUNN William Gunn had the following child:

14 ADAM 'DUNBEATH' GUNN Adam had two children – William 'Clyth' Gunn and John 'Latheron' Gunn. William had a son David born 1830. John had a son Alexander.

12.45 JOHN 'HOUSTRY DUNBEATH' GUNN John Houstry Dunbeath Gunn d. 1780 was the third son of William 'Kinbrace Houstry Dunbeath' Gunn (11,33). He is of interest as he had a son Alexander 'Osclay' Gunn (13). Alexander 'Osclay' married Barbara Weir (Wheir). They are buried at the old Parish Church in Latheron.

13. ALEXANDER 'OSCLAY' GUNN was born about 1752. He died on 23 January 1820. He married BARBARA WEIR (WHEIR) about 1781. She was born in 1760. She died on 5 February 1833. Alexander 'Osclay' Gunn and Barbara Weir (Wheir) had the following children:

14. CATHERINE 'OSCLAY' GUNN was born about 1782, died 1870. She married DONALD 'BRAEHOUR & BRAWLBIN'[13] GUNN (13,48) son of John 'Dalnaglaton Braehour'[12] Gunn (12,37) and Marjorie 'Rowens' Dunbar, on 3 March 1807 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. Donald was born on 16 June 1765 in Halkirk, Caithness Scotland. He died on 3 January 1861 in Caithness, Scotland. Donald Braehour and Brawlbin Gunn (13,48) was, as said, a direct descendant from Margaret Gunn (10,23) daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn. In consequence this is the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. *See the entry for DONALD 'BRAEHOUR & BRAWLBIN'[13] GUNN (13,48) for the important descendants. These are Braehour Gunns – the ongoing Clan Gun Chief line as is often said.*

Other descendants -

14. GEORGE GUNN was born in 1784 in Dunbeath, Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. He died on 22 October 1855 in Pultneytown, Wick, Caithness, Scotland. He married ANNE RHIND on 2 April 1814 in Wick, Caithness, Scotland. *Descendants*.

14. ROBERT GUNN was born in 1792.

14. SGT. JOHN GUNN was born 1796 (1794?) Aberdeen *Descendants*

14. MARGARET GUNN was born in 1797 in Breakachie, Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. She married ALEXANDER SUTHERLAND on 10 December 1827.

14. JAMES 'OSCLAY' GUNN was born 1800. He died in 1870 in Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. He married CHRISTINA MACLEOD on 15 August 1856 in Osclay, Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. She died in 1884 in Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. *Descendants*

14. ADAM 'USA' GUNN was born in 1803. *Descendants*

14. WILLIAM GUNN. He died on 25 June 1848 in Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. He married MARGARET CORMACK. She was born on 26 December 1811 in Latheron, Caithness, Scotland. She died on 4 January 1898 in Edinburgh, Midlothian, Scotland.

14. ALEXANDER GUNN. He died in 1828 in Jamaica.

PART SEVEN - 7.8 William Beag Gunn's lines from his fourth son 8.12 William of Acheneccan Gunn

SUMMARY:
The Acheneccan Gunns are not fully explored here.

8.12 WILLIAM OF ACHENECCAN GUNN (and others) (William Beag[7], David[6], Unknown MacHamish[5], William MacHamish[4], William MacHamish Cattaig[3], James[2], Coroner[1]) was born about 1593.

There has been much confusion in trees and histories about Donald the Scholar's (8,11) line (of Kinbrace) and that of his younger brother William of Acheneccan / Acanaichan / Achneakin's (8,12) line. The Acheneccan line is not totally clear - random extra names can occur but their descent from the Coroner is definite.

Achneakin was part of the greater Kinbrace in the early 1800s; it is described as *'Kinbrace Shinachy Achneakans* (Acheneccan) *and Achnahow'* by 1811.[730] Acheneccan was probably therefore part of the Kinbrace estate at an earlier time. It adds support for the Kinbrace Estate going to Donald (8,11) as the third main estate of the Gunns and his younger brother being settled on a minor part of that Kinbrace estate. And there is, of course, the unresolved question of Donald's son possibly continuing to own the Achentoul Estate and it going down the generations.

This means William Beag Gunn's (7,8) fourth son was William (8,12) with descendants in Acheneccan. The exact descendant sequence of names can be disputed but there were many descendants in the 1800s. Some of these descendants can be seen on the 1868, 1869 and 1896 trees and on the internet.[731] There are descendants alive today.

The Rev. Donald Sage's view[732] is - *'Robert Gunn of Achaneccan was another of the old men of my youthful remembrance. He was the acknowledged lineal descendant and representative of the Chiefs of the Clan Gunn in the Parish … He was a gentleman-like old man, who had been much in good society, and had received a somewhat liberal education. His descendants are still to be found here and there in the county of Caithness.'* The key point is that the Rev. Donald Sage accepted the Achaneccan line as an *'acknowledged lineal descendant and representative of the Chiefs of the Clan Gunn'.*

[730] Page 103, Ed. R. J. Adam, *Sutherland Estate Management Volume 1.*
[731] See, for example http://www.fpchurch.org.uk/publications/the-free-presbyterian-magazine/1998-to-2003/november-2003/the-achreny-mission-3-after-the-disruption-part-1-rev-d-w-b-somerset-698/ accessed 10 November 2017. See http://clangunn.weebly.com/william-in-achanaichan--achaneccan-line-being-the-2nd-son-of-donald-the-scholar.html for detail of descendants accessed 12 November 2017.
[732] Page 137, Rev. Donald Sage *Parish life in the North of Scotland* (chapter 10, Home and College Life 1804-1805) http://www.electricscotland.com/history/parishlife/chapter10.htm accessed 12 November 2017.

The 1868 tree for William of Acheneccan[733] (8,12) is –

1. **William** settled in Achanaichan. (8,12)
2. Had a son **Donald**. (9,18)
3. This Donald had a son **William**. (10,26)
4. This William probably had a son **Robert**. (11,34)

> The exact sequence of these Acheneccan Gunns is not totally clear; but their descent from William Beag (7,8) is perfectly clear. Of the family it is said –
>
> *'One Free Presbyterian from Westerdale was the notable Chirsty Gunn. Her grandfather Robert had lived at Achaneccan in Kildonan, and Donald Sage remembered him as "a gentleman-like old man who had been much in good society, and had received a somewhat liberal education". He had the best claim to the disputed chieftainship of the clan Gunn but he had fallen on hard times. David, her father, was his eldest son and had married Catherine, daughter of John Ross (c1733-1775), the minister of Kildonan from 1761 to 1775. Catherine was a woman "as remarkable for her deep piety as for her prepossessing appearance", and David too was an eminently humble and pious man. When Kildonan was cleared, he moved to Strath Beag above Westerdale and became the catechist for the district. John Munro, Halkirk, held him in high regard. On one occasion, shortly before the Communion, his only cow died. The subject at the Fellowship Meeting was the marks of love to the brethren, and Ensign Joseph Mackay gave the meeting a practical turn by declaring, "If we only had among us a little of the love of which we have been speaking and hearing today, David Gunn would not be long until he got a new cow". David died in 1827, while his wife Catherine, who had been born on 12 June 1773, lived to be about 100.*
>
> *Chirsty Gunn herself died aged 85 on 16 July 1900 and was buried near her parents in the Achreny burying-ground. She in turn had outlived her husband James Bain by 39 years.'*[734]

Catherine was half-sister to William (11) and Morrison Gunn (11) – see their lives and see the life of Alexander Gunn of Badanloch, later of Wester Helmsdale (10,19).

David 'Cathechist' Gunn was son of Robert 'Sennachy' Gunn (13,56).

5. This Robert had a son **William**. (12,46)
6. This William had a son **Robert the Sennachy** (13,56) 1806. Married twice
7. Robert (13,56) had four sons (order not given), perhaps more…

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[733] See pages 120-121, 149, 169 and elsewhere in Thomas Sinclair *The Gunns*. He is not always accurate and can argue against himself. The main point is '*Little William's* (William Beag (7,8)) *... son William* (Acheneccan (8,12)) *had sons John* (wrong – not Acheneccan line – but John Gunn in Navidale of Borroble (8,10))*, and Donald* (9,18), *from the former of whom William and Gunns of Osclay'* pages 120-122. Now, that again shows that the Osclay Gunns – see the first two appendices - certainly descend from the MacHamish line. See, as well, the chart on page 270, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*. It also is again not totally accurate but has the Gunns of Osclay descending from William Beag (7,8).

[734] 'The Achreny Mission 3. After the Disruption' - Part 1 by the Rev D W B Somerset at http://www.fpchurch.org.uk/magazines/fpm/2003/November/article3.php accessed 10 August 2018.

Robert's (13,56) **sons** probably were

14. ALEXANDER GUNN Alexander (merchant in Thurso) had two children; Robert 'London' Gunn born 1890, dwi, and Isabella Gunn who married WILLIAM MCDONALD, Thurso. Was this the Alexander Gunn 'merchant in Thurso' involved in the Chiefship debate of the 1800s and who in the early 1820s was the Treasurer of the 'Loyal and United Benevolent Society of the Clan Gunn'?

14. WILLIAM GUNN born 1778 Achaneccan Farm, Kildonan. He died in 1861 in Durness. He married ISABELLA SYME. They had William Gunn 'Officer' Durness (and other children) who had William, Factor at Castle Leod.

14. DAVID 'CATECHIST' GUNN He died in 1827 in Olgrinbeg, Scotland. He married (1) CATHERINE ROSS. Catherine Ross is of interest because she was the daughter of the Rev. Ross and Anne Rose. Anne Rose had been first married to Chief Alexander Gunn of Badanloch later Wester Helmsdale (10,19). This makes Catherine Ross a half-sister to Chief William Gunn and Morrison Gunn (both generation 11). Catherine and David had a son John and a daughter Chirsty (Achreny Mission). She married James Bain. She died 16 July 1900**.**

Other possible generation 14 descendants were -

- Alexander (14,i) merchant in Thurso who had son Robert in London 1869
- William Gunn (14,ii) who had William Gunn Officer Durness who had William Factor at Castle Leod.
- David Catechist (14,iii) died at Olgrinbeg, who had son John
- John DWI (14,iv). Was he really James?

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12. MacHamish 'owners' of Killernan, Borrobol, Navidale and Kinbrace Estates.

Evidence for the following can be found in the lives of the MacHamishes.[735] An asterisk (or two or three) against a name or **bold** is to make it easier to see the shift of a person from one property to another.

Killernan

Acquired around 1450.

Name	Year	Son of	Further Information
James Gunn (2,2)		Son of Coroner Gunn (1,1).	James moved to Killernan about 1450.
William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3)		Son of James Gunn (2,2).	
William MacHamish (4,4)		Son[736] of William MacHamish Cattigh (3,3).	
Unknown MacHamish (5,5)		Son of William MacHamish (4,4).	
David Gunn (6,6)		Son of Unknown MacHamish (5,5).	
Alexander MacDavid Gunn (7,7)	Alive circa 1624.	Son of David Gunn (6,6).	Alexander had a younger brother **William Beag** (7,8) who is identified as Killernan linked in 1601. William Beag was in Killernan by 1617.
William Mhor Gunn (8)	Alive 1624.	Son of Alexander MacDavid Gunn (7,7).	William Mhor (8) succeeded to Killernan in 1624, possibly 1614. Died without issue by 1636.
*Alexander Gunn (8,9)		Eldest son of **William Beag** (7,8).	Alexander (8,9) was in Borrobol by 1617. Of Killernan before 1636. Of Navidale by 1636. Dead circa 1658.
**John Gunn (9,13)	Born c. 1636.	Eldest son of *Alexander Gunn (8,9).	Still in Killernan 1652. Of Killernan by 1658. John may have spent the end of his life at Navidale. Alive 1679.
Alexander Gunn (10)		Eldest son of **John Gunn (9,13).	Of Killernan by 1679. He disappeared from history…

Gunns no longer hold Killernan sometime after 1679 and before 1704 as Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) is of Badanloch before then. Although once in Killernan there is no record for Donald being of Killernan; he was the youngest son of Alexander Gunn (8,9) and brother of John Gunn (9,13).

[735] The Gunns only had the wadset of these properties – the owner was the Sutherland Estate.

[736] For William MacHamish (4,4), Unknown MacHamish (5,5) and David Gunn (6,6) it is an assumption that these are sons following each other – history does not provide evidence one way or the other. Younger brothers / Uncles, nephews etc are all possible 'owners' of the Estate as shown when William Beag's descendants took over various properties.

Borrobol

Borrobol is secondary to Killernan. The Red River Settlement in Canada 1810s onwards records two lots of Borrobol Gunns so the wadset remained in the family. Thomas Sinclair supplement 21 gives further detail about them and says they were 'near relatives' of the chief of the clan.

Name	Year	Son of	Further Information
*Alexander Gunn (8,9)	In Borrobol by 1617.	Eldest son of **William Beag** (7,8).	Of Killernan before 1636 and of Navidale 1636. Presumably he moved to Killernan following William Mhor's death / incapacity.
***John Gunn (8,10)	Of Borrobol 1649-1652 at least.	Second son of **William Beag** (7,8).	In Navidale by 1620.
George Gunn (9,16)	Of Borrobol	Son of ***John Gunn (8,10).	One son John (10,24) married Margaret Gunn (10,23) daughter of Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15). He had at least two brothers.

Navidale

Acquired 1636.

Name	Year	Son of	Further Information
***John Gunn (8,10)	In Navidale 1620 before it was Gunn property.	Second son of **William Beag** (7,8).	Of Borrobol 1649-1652 at least.
*Alexander Gunn (8,9)	Of Navidale 1636	Eldest son of **William Beag** (7,8).	Of Killernan before 1636.
Alexander Gunn (9)	Of Navidale around 1668?	Second son of *Alexander Gunn (8,9).	Probably lived at Navidale.
**John Gunn (9,13)	Born circa 1636, alive 1679.	Eldest son of *Alexander Gunn (8,9).	In Killernan 1652. Of Kilernan 1658. Lived at Navidale by 1679.

Kinbrace

Acquired 1638.

Name	Year	Son of	Further Information
Donald the Scholar (8,11)	Of Kinbrace by August 1638	The third son of **William Beag** (7,8).	Donald owned the Achentoul Estate before Kinbrace and at least six generations of Gunns are recorded as owners. Are these also Donald's descendants?
William Gunn (9,17)		Eldest son of Donald the Scholar (8,11).	
Adam Gunn (10,25)		Eldest son of William Gunn (9,17).	
William Gunn (11,33)	Gave up Kinbrace 1714.	Eldest son of Adam Gunn (10,25).	

13. Biographies from Alexander 'Dalnaglaton' Gunn's ongoing Braehour Chief line

The Braehour Gunns

(11.32) Alexander 'Dalnaglaton' Gunn was the younger brother of George Dalfridh, Achsoriclate Gunn from whom came the first legally established Clan Gunn Chiefs namely Chief Hector Gunn d. 1803, Chief George Gunn 1787 – 1859, Chief Donald Gunn 1828 – 1863 and Chief Hector Gunn 12 October 1830 – 20 August 1874). That line died out of Clan Gunn Chiefs.

Alexander's first son, John 1721 -1810, moved to Braehour where he probably had eight children. This is the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line. Two of John's sons, William and Donald, provide historically significant descendants.

'The Brisbane Courier' (Australia) newspaper of 31 March 1927 Page 19 records that Viscount Stanley Melbourne Bruce (being the eighth Prime Minister of Australia) was of Gunn Braehour descent and that 'Braehour, (was) the home of… the chief of the clan Gunn.' I have not yet been able to trace the link.

Braehour farm 2011; Braehour (originally Dalnaglaton) Gunns are the senior, ongoing descent line from the Clan Gunn Chiefs.

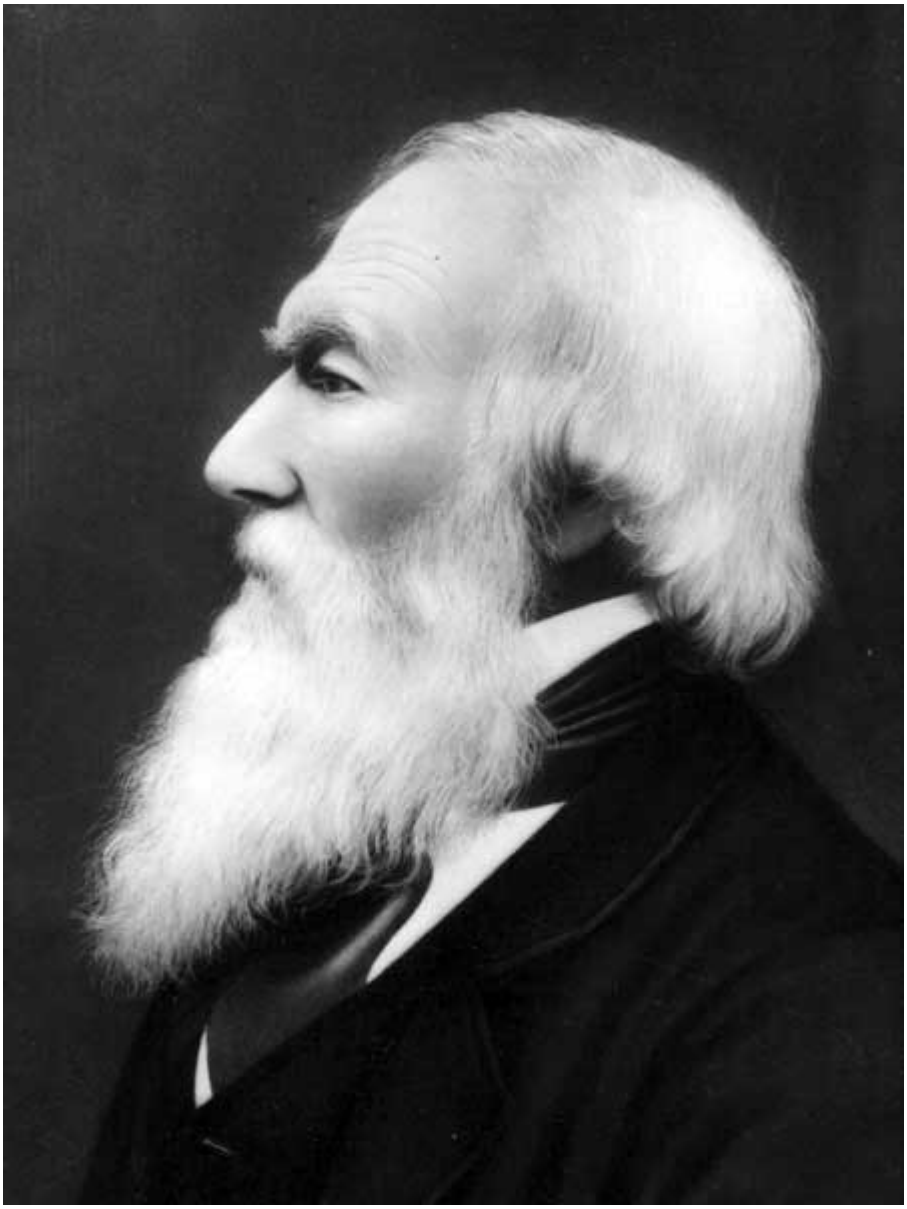
William Gunn, son of John Gunn, had two sons of note namely

1) The Honorable Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada 1797 – 1878 *and*
2) William Gunn of Waranga Basin, Victoria Australia 1804 -1888.

Donald Gunn, the sennachy, son of John Gunn, had a grandson of note namely

1) Donald Gunn of Brawlbin and Ballarat, Victoria, Australia 1832 – 1901 *and this Donald Gunn had a son*
2) The Honorable John Alexander Gunn of New South Wales, Australia 1860 - 1910

The Honorable Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada 1797 – 1878



Hon. Donald Gunn[737]

The following is from Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Gunn reproduced under license see http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/

Donald Gunn[738] (September 1797–30 November 1878) was a Manitoba politician and member of the Province's Legislative Council (which he helped to abolish).

Gunn was born in Orkney, Scotland, in 1797. He worked in the Canadian North West for the Hudson's Bay Company between 1813 and 1823, and was subsequently a Judge on the Court of Petty Sessions in Red River. He also wrote for the Smithsonian Institution[739] and the Institute of Rupert's Land, and was a member of the Board of Management for Manitoba College (a Presbyterian institution).

Gunn was a supporter of Canadian Confederation and the Government of Adams George Archibald. In Manitoba's first general election (27 December 1870), he ran against Provincial Secretary and fellow Archibald-supporter Alfred Boyd. He was defeated by 58 votes to 28.

Gunn was appointed to the Province's new Legislative Council on 15 March 1871, one of seven members. In 1876, he supported the decision of the Robert A. Davis government to abolish the institution.

Donald Gunn died in 1878.

[737]Baptism: June 10, 1798, Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland (Source: Halkirk Christenings, Batch \#C11037-4 Ser\# 01255-1.) Burial: Little Britain Cemetery, St. Andrews, Manitoba, Canada. (Source: (1) Headstone in Cemetery., (2) *Joyce Anaka Family History Book*., (3) Little Britain United Church Cemetery Transcripts.) Census: 1838, Manitoba Red River Settlement Elected: Bet. 1871 - 1876, Legislative Council (Source: *Joyce Anaka Family History Book*.) Immigration: June 28, 1813, Stromness, Scotland aboard the Eddystone (Source: *Joyce Anaka Family History Book*, page 6.) Occupation: Aft. 1822, Farmer (Source: *Joyce Anaka Family History Book*.) Retirement: 1822, Freeman from Hudson's Bay Company (Source: Hudson Bay Company Archives, Donald Gunn Bio Sheet.)

[738]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Gunn reproduced under license see http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/

[739]Smithsonian Institution, *Annual report*, *1878* (Washington), 63–64. Donald Gunn, "Indian remains near Red River settlement, Hudson's bay territory," Smithsonian Institution, *Annual report*, *1867* (Washington), 399–100*;* "Notes of an egging expedition to Shoal lake, west of lake Winnipeg. Made under the direction of the Smithsonian Institution in 1867 . . ."

And for a fulsome, 'Victorian phrased', life—

SKETCH OF THE LIFE of the late HON. DONALD GUNN[740]; *author presumably C.R. Tuttle*

Prominently one whose scholarly instinct was of a verity a part of his nature, the author of the History of which this brief notice is a prefix, Donald Gunn, was born in the Parish of Halkirk in the County of Caithness, Scotland, in the year 1797, and sprang from that strong and fertile class of peasant farmers whose health of body and mind-nurtured in the frugal simplicity of their native hill—has furnished so many worthy sons to the stout old land that gave them birth. A land whose scant nurture and limited scope, while it conserves so much, yet breeds a necessity enriching other shores than those of the rugged peninsula stretching its rocky arm into the wild northern seas, sending out, from time to time, to the great unoccupied spaces her colonizing children, who achieve by virtue of inherent and trained qualities—that stand them ever instead—a success second to none, if equaled by any.

Of the children of the tenant of the old farm house in the strath of Braeholme, two furnish worth proof of this fact, an elder son seeking at an earl day his fortune in the wilds of Australia, becoming in due course of time one of the largest wool growers and sheep farmers in the colony: the other, the subject of our memoir, who turning his face to the west, wrought out amid the ice and snow of the northern land, not only fair fortune but an honored name.

It was in the Parish School of Halkirk that the blue-eyed, fair haired Scotch lad first mastered the mystic signs that were to prove to him in after years, such unvarying delight. Here the speech of the Hills took precedence, and the Gaelic (the tongue the Scotsmen fondly boast contains all others) found an apt and loving pupil; one who the latest years of his life knew no poet king save Ossian, no loftier flight than that of the strong wing of the early Scottish bard, whose bold imaginings conned by the boy on the mist clad heights of the tempestuous shore, resonant with the mighty music of the sea, found quick interpretation, and were framed kindred elevation, leaving a picture no time could fade.

Secondary, came the alien English—the strange classic spoken by the Southerns—that lent dignity to the little school-house, whose curriculum boasted these two alone, yet in themselves an education holding all of flexibility and power that written or spoken thought demands, an equipment, seeming slender, in reality full of pith.

Happily for the boy, the hills and valley, the storm and sunshine on the heather-clad braes, the glory and changeful lights of his mountain, sea grit home, these too were his teachers. Here following the herds, or watching the browsing, wandering sheep, he drank in a tranquil strength he little wot of, received the silent benison of nature, knitting together the robust tissues that make life a harmony, a forceful quietude, breeding strength for cheerful essay of all tasks, admirably fitted for the one that now came quickly to his youthful hand.

[740] Being from Donald Gunn and C. R. Tuttle, *History of Manitoba from the earliest settlement to 1835 by the late Hon. Donald Gunn, and from the admission of the province into the Dominion by Charles R. Tuttle* (Ottawa, 1880).

The Hudson's Bay Company, who had depots and shipping ports on the neighbouring islands, had long been in the habit of mainly recruiting their force of servants among the hardy, frugal people in the north of Scotland and the Orkney Isles. Their ships were the 'argosies' that freighted fortunes from the distant shores of Hudson's Bay; and their ships were to the simple youth of the coast—wearied with an unremunerative toil that held no future—the brave craft that would bear them to a better fate. The slender stipend promised seemingly, by home comparison, large indeed.

Young Donald, now some sixteen summers, urged by such thoughts, and a love of wandering that seems instinctive at a certain period of life, aware of the large number of families being sent out by the Earl of Selkirk, engaged with the local agent, and in the year of grace, 1813, found himself duly enrolled as servant of the great fur trading company, and bound for York Factory, on Hudson's Bay, in company with the Pilgrim Fathers of the North-West, now widely known as the Selkirk Settlers.[741]

The future historian will yet linger over the pages of this volume, in seeking to portray anew the story of these people. No record of colonial life is more affecting than the tearful embarkation of these cottagers, their hardships at the bay, and the culminating and dreadful distresses in which they and their helpless families were plunged on their arrival at the Red River, caused by their miserable and unexpected involvement in the deadly strife and murderous competition of the two great rival companies, their own protectors and the wild half-savage men of the "North-West"

The suffering is so real and persistent, their patience so admirable, their helpless acceptance of the most grievous situation so simple and unostentatious, that it hardly seems real; deepening our sympathy and admiration as we look upon the picture of to-day, the smiling farms of their children and descendants, where plenty and peace brood over the spot fraught to their progenitors with terror, flight and distress.

The life of a "Company man'—in the phrase of the country—is either fraught with incident or entirely uneventful, being simply a matter of locality. "The Severn District", abutting upon, "the Bay," in which Mr. Gunn passed his ten years of service, was the natural stronghold of the Hudson's Bay men, peopled by peaceful, inoffensive Indians, and productive of no marked event, while at the same time the plains to the west—as is seen in this narrative—were, with the Red River Country, the theatre of a warfare so fatal to the contestants as to impel the coalition of the great rivals, the North-West Company being merged into that of the Hudson's Bay in the year 1821.

But the time, to a man of Mr. Gunn's energetic character, and thirst for knowledge, was not—if barren of event—unprofitably spent. His vicinity to the great depot of the north, and his early promotion to the position of a lesser postmaster, threw him continually into the society of the leading men of the Company, from whose conversation he derived a great store of exact information touching the past and contemporaneous history of the great governing Corporation. He was also enabled to acquire, by loan or purchase, books, and the digest of his acquisitions at his period, as shown in conversation and

[741]Note taken from Hudson's Bay Company Archives**;** Donald is described in 1814-1815 as with "dark brown hair, strong, well made", but "desires to return home".

reminiscences in after years, was of singular fullness and value. An immense amount of local character detail of the most unique and interesting description has by his decease, been forever lost to the lesser records of our colonial history, a loss as great to us in the future as would have been the early destruction of "Pepys' Diary" to the English people.

The year 1819 was to Mr. Gunn alike a memorable and happy one, he then marrying Margaret, the eldest daughter of James Swain, Esquire, the officer in charge of the York District, a union blessed and fortunate in every respect—one unbroken for a period of fifty years.

That the newly married couple were in no danger of being at the time of their marriage enervated by luxury, Mr. Gunn would, with a keen recollection of the time and their freedom from care and grief, amusingly relate. In addition to the usual allowance of small stores, their outfit of meats and breadstuffs was more suggestive than real, consisting of a "flint trade gun," ammunition, and twine for nets. The hardship was but in seeming, game and fish abounded, Indian and traders alike resorted to their well stocked "preserves" for subsistence, and, possibly, the jaded epicures of the city would have envied the young couple their keen enjoyment of their woodland fare.

A deprivation more felt was at times when in recent possession of a treasured book, to be without candles or oil, when thinly split pitch pine fagots would light up the house, drag from their shadowy coverts the finest print, and convert the snug log dwelling, nestled in evergreens, into a hall of learning, where each recurring page folded down and conserved satisfactions remembered through life.

It being found inexpedient by the Hudson's Bay Company after the absorption of the North-West, to maintain so large a force as the united employees of the late Company and its own, certain reductions were determined upon, and Mr. Gunn gladly availed himself of the opportunity to retire. With his wife and newly born son, he followed his old friends, the "Selkirk Settlers," to the Red River, settling in what is now the Parish of St. Andrews, but which he and a few friends of certainly ambitious loyalty for the time, named "Little Britain," scarce for seeing that their tiny speck of civilization would ripen so quickly, and assure here and to the west a "Greater Britain."

The locality chosen, however, proved to be a good one, and drew about it a more than usually intelligent class of "freemen," as the retired servants of the Company were called; among them Mr. William Smith, and English worthy full of strong, honest points, one of the most genial and humorous of men, who had also married a daughter of Mr. Swain, and was after appointed Secretary to the Council of Assiniboia and Clerk of the Local Courts, an office which he held until his death.

Happily for the new farmers, these were the halcyon days of the hunters. Buffalo were near and plenty, the net was ever in the water, sturgeon and "gold eyes" daily fare. Without ploughs, tools or cattle, their first attempts at agriculture were of the rudest description; putting down wheat with a hoe, the quantity of seed is not hard to surmise, yet from such a beginning ere many years—aided by his stout sons—spacious stone house with ample stabling for the large stock of horses and horned animals, and abundant grain, made the homestead of Donald Gunn one of the foremost in the entire settlement, one whose abundance made glad many a luckless soul.

After an interval of ten years spent in active farming, Mr. Gunn found himself, by the increasing size and usefulness of his large family so relieved from personal attention to the farm, that he was enabled to take charge of the Parish School established, and, with the exception of the very slight contributions of the parents, supported by the Mission Society of the English Church.

This task, one held in the highest honor and respect in those primitive days—to the shame of our own diminished and unwise estimate be it spoken—was one so congenial to his taste, that, fortunately for the youth of both sexes in his charge, it was continued without intermission by him for the long period of eighteen years.

A period of usefulness in one of the highest and most responsible functions possible to an individual, one which while training others had disciplined and fitted for distinction many of our best thinkers and actors in the world of statecraft and of letters.

This was, in the case of Mr. Gunn, very distinctly avouched, not only in the career of numbers of his pupils who attained to positions of public trust and honor, but even more certainly, if less marked, in the sustained life impress made upon all, intelligence bearing fruit by many a fireside, unseen rivulets trained to fertilize and make glad an otherwise barren field.

Had the classes in charge of Mr. Gunn been fired with the same student ardor—simple and pure love of knowledge for its own sake—as their teacher, his task, always an arduous one, would have been slight indeed. Its compensation lay in the fact that he was at least at the Centre of all literary lore in the North-West, in contact with such varied and sufficient printed erudition as made him more than content.

When, later, made custodian and librarian in his own house of the only public collection of books in the country, he was fairly environed with satisfaction, each tome a silent friend.

The spacious stone farm-house to which we have adverted, was always the hospitable home, alike of the purposeless tourist or the wandering Savant who sought its well known doors in search of special facts in the physical geography or natural history of the vast terra incognita of which the Red River settlement was the threshold.

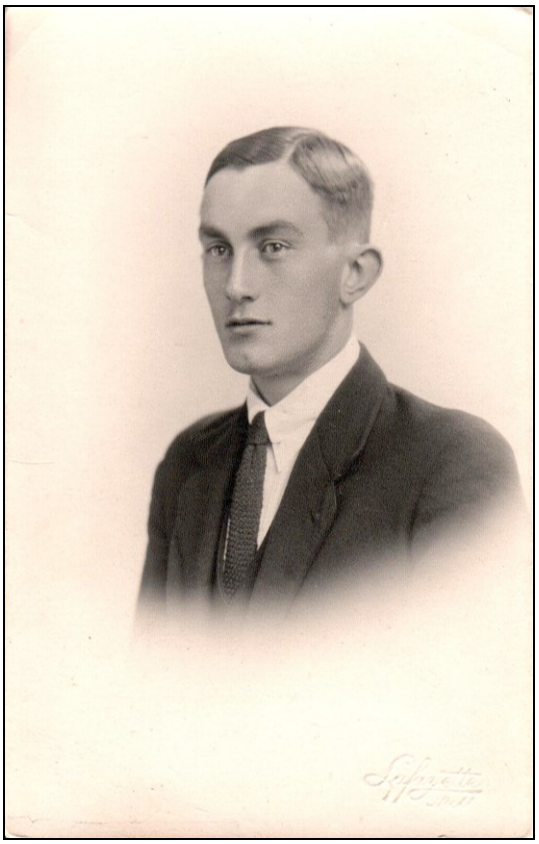
At Donald Gunn's, the stranger found not only the warmth of a home, but an intelligence which threw light on all detail of purposed travel and entered into and discussed every them of scientific research.

The personal characteristics of Mr. Gunn were of the most engaging character. In an intercourse of nearly twenty years we fail to recall other than the most genial and unaffected cordiality to all; super added to this, his varied powers of conversation, replete with valuable matter gathered from all sources, his sense of humor lighting up old Gaelic lore, the traditions of the Viking race from whom he sprung, the rough adventures and eccentricities of the hero worthies of "the trade" the early and chequered life in the settlement, with a vein of grounded culture running through all, made him to be one of the most companionable and instructive of men.

An Elder in the Kirk for many years, Mr. Gunn's liberality of thought—in this direction—would have been marked were it not for the general charity and largest tolerance universal in the country. Latterly, when he had retired mainly from public affairs, nearly all of Mr. Gunn's time was occupied in the preparation of this history, arranging his collated facts and personal experience with such care and patience as will doubtless cause it to be—as he intended it should be—an authority upon all the matters coming under his hands. Towards the close of his life, his sight failing him, it was his greatest pleasure to have some one read aloud to him from his favorite authors, his mind retaining its force and clearness until a few hours before his death. This occurred on the last day of November, 1878, in his own house, surrounded by his family, the parting being so peaceful as to be literally falling asleep.

Two grandsons of the Hon. Donald Gunn

Rev. Henry George Gunn 1866-1945



John J. Gunn[742] *1861-1907*

Being sons of John Gunn and Emma Garrioch.

[742]Provisionally identified.

William Gunn of Waranga Park, Victoria, Australia 1804 – 1888

Waranga is roughly in the triangle between the rural towns of Shepparton, Nagambie and Rushworth of Victoria, Australia.

William Gunn of Waranga.[743]

[743] I believe this image to be of William Gunn. I suspect it came into my possession via his granddaughter Janettie McMillan in the early 1970s. The title of his land in Victoria has varied over time – Waranga, Waranga Park, Waranga Swamp are but some of the titles used.

The life of William Gunn of Waranga

William Gunn of Waranga's parents were William Gunn in[744] Braehour and his father's second wife Janet Sinclair. He was a grandson of 11.32 Alexander Dalnaglaton Gunn – Alexander's brother 11.31 George Gunn's line was the Clan Gunn Chief line established in 1803 until it ran out of Gunns.

William Gunn of Waranga was born in 1804 in Halkirk Parish, presumably at home which was the Braehour farm, and was christened on 28 April 1805.[745] It was also the home of his grandparents, and at least some of uncles, aunts and their families at various times. It seems reasonable to assume that William's early life in rural, isolated, early nineteenth century Caithness was crowded involved, farm work, religion and education. It was a tough environment in which to live.

At least by adulthood William had left the farm - he was promoted from sheriff-officer to being a messenger-at-arms on 10 November 1837 in Caithness[746] and was still a messenger-at-arms on 6 June 1841 at living at Bridge Street, Wick according to the 1841 census. Basically, such positions were about serving and enforcing court judgments and orders so were 'law and order' positions but not a policeman. Presumably such positions required education, good character, tact and some personal presence.

William married Cecilia Cormack on 26 July 1850 at Aberdeen, Scotland. [747] She was born in 1819 in Wick Parish, Caithness. [748] The census of 30 March 1851 recorded William, his wife and five-month old daughter Margaret (Marnie) living at Willowbank in what is now Wick.[749] William and Cecilia had six children. These were Margaret 1850 – 1929, Janet 1852 – 1888, William the younger 1853 – 1921, Elizabeth 1859-1921, Alexander 1861-1915 and Cecilia 1863-1864. For their life stories see Part 3.

It is unclear exactly when William emigrated leaving his family at home. Given the birth date of 1853[750] for his son (William the younger) then William of Waranga could not have left Scotland before April 1852.

His wife Cecilia later emigrated, first class, on the 'Kent' and arrived 23 October 1857 in Victoria with her son William, leaving daughters Margaret and Janet with relatives in Scotland until 1874.[751] Why were the two daughters left behind for so long, especially as William was wealthy? What impact did it have on them?

[744] The 'in' and 'of' is significant in Scottish history – 'in' means a person lived somewhere but 'of' meant a person owned it. More likely, 'of' meant the person had the wadset of a property – a sort of long-term rent. In other words, parents were more likely to be 'of' a property but children would be 'in' a property.
[745] Caroline Armstrong, e-mail message to Donald Gunn, 20 Mar 2006.
[746] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[747] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[748] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[749] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[750] Many places give this date including the Australian Cemetery Index 1808-2007.
[751] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.

Cecilia and William's grand-daughter Janettie MacMillan recorded that 'I am also distantly related to the Rev. Peter Gunn … when my grandmother and father arrived out here (Victoria, Australia) in 1857 they stayed with the Rev. Peter Gunn & Mrs Gunn at Campbellfield until grandfather was able to go for them.' The Reverend Peter Gunn is of importance not merely for his religious work in early Victoria but also as his son Aeneas married Jeannie Taylor who achieved real fame as the author Mrs Aeneas Gunn of 'We of the Never-Never'. Thomas Sinclair in his 'The Gunns' records some family trees held by Aeneas Gunn of Edinburgh – I have copies of these 1868-1870 Trees which made their way to the Reverend Peter Gunn's family.[752] These Trees suggest strong links to the Braehour Gunns but it is not quite clear how these families merge. Other evidence is also around supporting the link.[753]

One version of why William went to Victoria is recorded by William Watkins Gunn and Marcus Daniel Gunn. They were William's first cousin twice removed. William and Marcus's father was Donald Gunn who migrated to Victoria, later the Ballarat region, in late December 1854., see the following biography. The Ballarat and Waranga Gunn families certainly knew each other.[754] The story was recorded by William and Marcus when they visited Scotland as part of the 'Australian Scottish Delegation Tour of the Motherland 1928.' It goes -

(William) *was Messenger at Arms at Wick. Two young men committed a crime and a tinker named Cluny who was had up for stealing was with them. William Gunn was taking the three of them to Inverness and stopped the other side of Helmsdale for the night at an inn, putting the two prisoners and the tinker in an upstairs room while he and some more were drinking downstairs. The tinker told the other two if they wanted to go he would take the handcuffs off as he was too old to go himself, so he took their handcuffs off and they opened the window, jumped out and got away. William Gunn was held responsible and had to resign. He then went to Australia…*[755]

Now this story does not show William in a good light, as such it suggests at least some of it might be true – possibly all of it. Losing such a job in such a way would impinge on how others see you which might help explain emigration. But we should also be aware of the goldrush in the colony of Victoria and the consequent allure of emigration to that colony. William had family connections in Canada – his older half-brother the Hon. Donald Gunn of Manitoba had started working for the Hudson's Bay Company by 1813 and was certainly very established and well-known by the 1850s. William's older brother John (and therefore younger half-brother to Donald Gunn of Manitoba) also died in Canada, it

[752] See page 13, Alastair Gunn *Clan Gunn Family Trees: From Killernan (Clan Gunn Chief) to Corrish, Kinbrace and Osclay Gunns.*
[753] My suspicion is that the link is through a younger brother of Alexander Gunn of Osclay.
[754] Letters written in 1974 exist from Janettie Gunn, William Gunn's granddaughter, where mention is made of knowing the Millers 'in my early days very well'. Catherine Gunn married James Miller - she was the sister of Donald Gunn, they migrated to Australia together. Mention is also made of Janettie meeting the Surman family of Ballarat - Donald had another sister Janet who married John Surman. Janettie had also met Gladys Gunn a couple of times; Gladys was the niece of William Watkins Gunn and Marcus Daniel Gunn, being the daughter of their brother John Alexander Gunn (see biography), the noted colonial scientist (he invented an anthrax vaccine suitable for Australian conditions) and member of the New South Wales Parliament. These letters can be found on pages 447-448 of Donald Gunn and Alastair Gunn's *Scotland and Beyond; the Families of Donald Gunn (Tormsdale) and John Gunn Dalanaha, Strathmore and Braehour*.
[755] From Gunn family papers originally held by Barbara Gunn Padgett (Austin). Notes by William Watkin & Marcus Daniel Gunn made during a visit to Dirlot cemetery Scotland. 1928. See pages 338-344 Donald Gunn and Alastair Gunn *Scotland and Beyond; the Families of Donald Gunn (Tormsdale) and John Gunn (Dalnaha, Strathmore and Braehour).* The notes were written on paper from the Station Hotel Wick in June 1928, given to Sylvia Bairstow nee Padgett, daughter of Norman Gunn Padgett by her aunt Barbara Gunn Padgett who, on 16 February 2011, passed them to Donald Gunn, son of Malcolm Gunn.

is not known when he emigrated. For William it is possible that prospects of gold and the warmth of Australia overcame the temptations of Canadian family support.

The journey time to Australia was typically two to three months which meant William arrived in Victoria, at the earliest in June – July 1852.

'The Argus' of 1 October 1855 recorded[756] a forthcoming auction for 10 October - 'By Order of the executors of the late Mr John McKay … 1849 sheep with right to the station known as Waranga Park, Lower Goulburn.' Clearly William cannot have obtained Waranga Park before the auction, but presumably he did fairly soon after it. The auction date clearly shows that the idea[757] William owned the property before the Waranga Gold rush which started in mid-1853, is wrong. William had obviously succeeded where the vast majority failed – make money from the gold, save it and buy (more accurately in William's case 'lease' which later transferred to ownership) something significant with the proceeds. William had obviously successfully worked as a gold miner[758] somewhere in Victoria for perhaps three years – it is not possible to say where as 'The Argus' newspaper had a Victoria-wide sale. William is recorded as occupying Waranga Station in the 1856 voters' list.[759] The land laws of Victoria at this time are confusing to follow and change over time; William was a 'squatter' a term which originally meant with no legal rights to the land but by William's time meant having lease rights from the Crown, often for long periods of time and for large areas and often for comparatively nominal rates. By sometime in the twentieth century such land was often owned outright. The term 'squattocracy' is often used to show the power and wealth of such people, with its deliberate links to 'aristcocracy.'[760]

It was a massive station - Waranga Park was 51,840 acres in 1856.[761] (By comparison the 1869 Land Act limited farms to a maximum of 320 acres.[762]) An 1888 view was that 'Waranga Park, at the present very much circumscribed in area, but which in days of yore embraced many miles on all sides of the existing town of Rushworth. This station he (William) held through every vicissitude of fortune up to the date of his demise, contending with Scottish stolidity against droughts that to most graziers were unsurmountable, and caused them to go to the wall. In the early days Mr Gunn earned a most enviable name as being the friend of the miners, never impounding stray horses or cattle, and assisting to the best of his power the poor struggler.'[763] One wonders if the friendliness shown to the miners reflected his remembrance of being a miner, or perhaps it was just Scottish Christian charity? Or both?

[756] 'The Argus' 1 October 1855, page 3.
[757] One example of this error can be found at https://www.g-mwater.com.au/downloads/gmw/LOWMPs/Waranga_LOWP_Web.pdf accessed 20 April 2021 being the 'Waranga Basin Land and On-Water Management Plan of 2011.'
[758] There is no other logical way to have earnt such money at this time. I recall that sometime in the 1990s a William Gunn Miner's licence was sold by a Melbourne (Victoria) Philatelic Auction House – and it was for the Waranga Gold Rush. Another document with it linked it to 'our' William Gunn. It is therefore possible that William went to the Waranga Gold Rush, made his money and so decided to buy the place. But this is memory and without the actual catalogue the idea is but a possibility.
[759] Page 17, Harley M. Foster *Waranga 1865-1965; A Shire History.*
[760] For an outline of this area see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squatting_(Australian_history).
[761] Letter, Edith Christoe to Donald Gunn, 29 Nov 2005. Edith Christoe was William Gunn of Waranga's great- granddaughter.
[762] Page 73, Harley M. Foster *Waranga 1865-1965; A Shire History.*
[763] From an obituary published in 'The McIvor Times and Rodney Advertiser' Friday 2nd November 1888.

William succeeded where most graziers went 'to the wall' - at least some of the reason for this success was that the property was also called Gunn's swamp or Waranga Lagoon.[764] One was that 'Gunn's swamp was a thickly timbered swamp and grew rushes in profusion'[765] which certainly suggest that the area was probably the last to lose water in summer and the first to refill which would be a real bonus in hot, northern Victoria. It was known as a massive duck shooting spot which implies more than a swamp.[766] A modern, official view is that it was a 'natural wetland.'[767] The word 'waranga' may have been the local aboriginal term for water.[768] All of which suggests Waranga Park was a very sensible acquisition by William.

As said, the Waranga Station was large so William needed to employ people to help run it. In November 1863 he is recorded as being the rate-payer for 'Waranga Park and Protectorate Stations'.[769] Protectorate Stations were established in various areas of Victoria to 'protect' the First Australians – the 'aborigines.' A map showing the 1840s Squatters Runs has the Protectorate being on land next door to Waranga Park going up to the Goulburn River. William Gunn's links to the Protectorate Station are unclear.

But farming did not all run smoothly, normal human passion could intervene. 'The Age' newspaper records one such event on Wednesday 20 February 1861 –

DEATH FROM STARVATION — James Barr, a native of Glasgow, who was lost from Gunn's Station Waranga Plains, ... was found on the 10th instant, after a long search, by one of the Messrs Winter's stockmen in a fearfully decomposed state. It appears that on the 26th of January a man residing in the same locality caught the deceased in his tent with his wife, and drove him away when it is supposed he wandered away into the Garra Garra Forest, where he was found, and was afraid to return. The police removed the body from where it was lying in the bush to Mr Brasher's Hotel, Rushworth, where a magisterial investigation was held before Mr J. T. Lewis, J.P. Dr O'Connor, who made a post mortem examination, was of opinion that the deceased died from inanition (lack of nourishment) ...

Other events occurred – a Waranga employed Chinese shepherd was convicted at Bendigo in August 1869[770] for killing a sheep, with intent to steal it. He had been suspected of previous 'thieving practices.'

William was a noted, significantly wealthy man (as mentioned, his wife and son emigrated First Class in 1857) and was prepared to do the extra work expected from such people. He was voted Chair of the inaugural Waranga District Road Board on 5 August 1863.[771] He was added to the roll of Magistrates for the Colony on 16 October 1863 as a Justice of the Peace. [772] In 1868[773] he would Chair a meeting at

[764] See, for example, pages 75 and 142, Harley M. Foster *Waranga 1865-1965; A Shire History.*
[765] 'The Argus' Friday 8 February 1907.
[766] 'The McIvor Times and Rodney Advertiser' Thurs 1 April 1909.
[767] See https://www.g-mwater.com.au/downloads/gmw/Storages/27_Nov_-_Waranga_Brochure_WEB.pdf accessed 26 April 2021 for the Goulburn Valley Water's 'Waranga Basin Recreation Guide' which is an example of this idea.
[768] According to *The Argus* page 10, 1 July 1927.
[769] Page 130, Harley M. Foster *Waranga 1865-1965; A Shire History.*
[770] 'Bendigo Advertiser' Monday 23rd August 1869.
[771] 'The McIvor Times and Rodney Advertiser' Friday 14th August 1863.
[772] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.

Darby's Hotel in Rushworth, supporting the sitting political member the Hon. J MacGregor. Presumably he would do similar work over the years. He was also a Trustee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria by August 1867. The 1861 Moderator was the Reverend Andrew Love: he had arrived in 1840.[774] The Rev Love's sister Margaret married Andrew Mitchell Younger Turner; their grand-daughter married John Alexander Gunn the Australian anthrax scientist and parliamentarian who will be discussed later and so was a relative of William's. The Reverend Peter Gunn who was also of significant Presbyterian Church of Victoria history is also presumed to be a relative; he was the sixth Minister of the Church in Victoria. William's links with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria were at the highest level.

The farm life continued with its ups and downs; William was before the Rushworth Court in July 1864 for having over 7000 unlicensed scabby sheep on his property and some few hundred further scabby sheep on a nearby Station. It was brought by the sheep inspector for the District and William was fined the considerable some of £900.[775] The fine is large – the *average* yearly wage in 1863 for a 'Generally useful man on the Station, with rations' was 15 shillings to 18 shillings.[776] The local impact of one of the wealthiest farmers – and a J.P. - being before the court and being found guilty can be imagined. William was issued with a licence for 8,800 sheep under The Scab Act, on 7 January 1874[777]

The nature of farming was changing –

By the time the N.S.W. squatters were prepared to initiate large-scale capital outlays on fencing, Victorian attitudes had become reasonably explicit and clear-cut. A proposal to fence a section of Waranga Park in Victoria makes this essential point in 1870: 'The absence of this fence renders unavailable about 12,000 acres of useful but scrubby country in which sheep would thrive running at large …. This large area would feed 3,000 sheep …. Mr Gunn …. reckons …. He could make £400 a year off this additional country …. The erection of this fence would enable him to discharge the 4 shepherds he now employs and thus save £225….[778]

It is not clear whether William Gunn did or did not fence his property, the key point is that he was at least prepared to consider it which shows his adaptability to new events and his financial soundness.

Family life continued; William's second daughter Janet married Alfred Collier, Manager of the Rushworth Commonwealth Bank, on 11 November 1887 at Waranga. She died at Waranga on 20 January 1888 from consumption; her brother-in-law the Presbyterian Rev. H Collier[779] who had married her also officiated at the funeral service.

The United Echuca and Waranga Waterworks Trust main water channel went through Waranga Park in 1888, the year of William's death, showing how the shortage of water was starting to be dealt with by

[773] 'The McIvor Times and Rodney Advertiser' Friday 7th February 1868.
[774] Page 3, 'Bendigo Advertiser,' Tuesday 20 August 1867.
[775] 'The Age' Friday 15 July 1864.
[776] Page 25, *The Victorian Year-Book* 1873.
[777] *Victoria Government Gazette*, 1874.
[778] Being from p. 93 N. G. Butlin, *Investment in Australian Economic Development 1861-1900*, Cambridge University Press.
[779] 'Rushworth Chronicle', 20 January 1888.

damming and irrigation; presumably some remuneration (and perhaps water) would have been made to the Gunns. After William death a survey on damming the Gunn's Waranga Lagoon in total was started in 1890, work began on it in 1902 and was completed in in 1909 and further enlarged in 1926. The dam covered about 3,000 acres, the majority of it owned by the Gunns who were still the leaseholders of the land.[780] Again, one presumes a financial settlement[781] would have been made for the compulsory acquisition. In his grand-daughter's view that which went underwater was 'the best of the land.'[782] William was granted a grazing licence for 18,970 acres at an annual rent of £64/5/- on 9 January 1888.[783]

William was not a well man in his last years, from about 1872 on he had severe rheumatism which meant he was generally confined to his bed. [784] He died 22 October 1888[785] at Waranga and an obituary noted that

The deceased had far exceeded the allotted span of human life three score and ten having entered his 84th year. His remains were interred in the Rushworth Cemetery on Wednesday, in the grave of his daughter Mrs Collier. Many of his old and most intimate friends assembled to pay the last tribute and testimony to one who in life and in death well merited that tribute. He leaves a widow, two sons and two daughters to mourn their loss.[786]

His estate was organised and probate was granted on 20 December 1888 in the Supreme Court in Melbourne. [787] His two daughters were left £8000 each, his wife was left the Station House and furniture for life and the two sons William the younger and Alexander were left the rest of the estate including all the land.

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The Gunns continue at Waranga Park; they were involved with the growth of lawn tennis in the Rushworth region in the depression of the 1890s.[788] It seems that William Gunn the younger transported the original home from Waranga once it was near going under water as the dam started to flood, to Rushworth, then relocated it in 1906[789] and his family onto what is now known as Finnigan's Island.[790] The received no compensation for the loss – or moving if you like - of their home.[791]

[780] 'Leader' Saturday 29th March 1902.
[781] 6,000 acres of land was bought from farmers at £10 an acre – it is not clear the cost of the leased land. See 'Leader' Saturday 29th March 1902.
[782] As mentioned in a letter written in 1974 from Janettie Gunn, William Gunn's granddaughter. See pages 447-448 of Donald Gunn and Alastair Gunn's *Scotland and Beyond; the Families of Donald Gunn (Tormsdale) and John Gunn Dalanaha, Strathmore and Braehour*.
[783] *Victoria Government Gazette*, 1888.
[784] From an obituary in the 'The McIvor Times and Rodney Advertiser' Friday 2nd November 1888.
[785] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[786] From an obituary in the 'The McIvor Times and Rodney Advertiser' Friday 2nd November 1888.
[787] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[788] Page 87 Harley M. Foster *Waranga 1865-1965; A Shire History.*
[789] 'The Riverine Herald' Saturday 21st April 1906.
[790] See http://www.rushworthtourism.com.au/Stanhope.html
[791] 'The Argus' Friday 3 August 1906.

Of interest is an 1893 letter by William's wife Cecilia to her husband's niece Janet Gunn Muckle (1846-1930) in Canada on 6 October 1893. Janet[792] was the daughter of the Honourable Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada (see the earlier biography) and she had married Alexander Montgomery Muckle. The tone and detail in the letter show a long-lasting, close link to that branch of the Canadian family. It also reveals major family tensions in the Waranga Gunns especially regarding her eldest daughter Margaret (Marnie), her second daughter Janet and her fourth daughter Elizabeth (Bessie). Alexander is also mentioned, being the second son and fifth child. The wealth of the family is obvious given it includes international travel in the major depression which impacted on Victoria in the 1890s.

Waranga Park, October 6, 1893

My Dear Mrs Muckle

… We are here moving along in the old way and each doing his and her duties as well we can. Our boys are here preparing for the shearing which begins in a fortnight. We have had a very wet winter and the earth has got a fine soaking a state if things very desirable here and now as the warm weather advances everything looks lovely and green. Our garden looks charming at the present the flowers these gems of the earth being all in bloom and in all the gayest hues of color. Our homestead is very pleasantly situated on rising ground which slopes down to a small water course where Alexander made an embankment which conserves a fine sheet of water for our garden. But I am forgetting that Marnie has been with you for I am sure her valuable tongue will have described everything here to you.

I suppose you hear from Marnie oftener than we do for she seemed to enjoy herself very much while with you. Don't you think it very queer of her staying there among strangers so far from her own family more especially while her old mother is in the land of the living. I must tell you Janet that I was very angry with Marnie before she left here and I think you will say I had reason when I tell you that she never entered her sister Bessie's home since she was married although her place is not two miles from here and I must tell you Bessie did not make a low marriage by any means. The Ingrams are all very respectable and Bessie chose Mr. Alex from among many wooers. They are a very happy couple and she has a neat and pretty country home and a freehold of over 1000 acres of good land. Bessie has been in better health lately since the last operation was performed, she has improved greatly. I forget whether I told you that Bessie had a second operation we had her over here for a time and two doctors attended her. Her side being probed four times while under the influence of chloroform. I don't know whether Marnie knows all this or not as I never wrote her about it. As it seems to me Marnie estimation to be married is to have committed the unpardonable sin. I have no doubt that Marnie will be very much disappointed at her brother not taking the trip home that he intended taking when she left here. Since then our monetary institutions have been tumbling down one after another and causing a great deal of anxiety and loss to many who had their all invested in them. This state of things doubtless influenced Alex to give up his trip to the old country and to your big country and its big show. Some little time before I received your letter I noticed in a newspaper the death of your husband's relative Sir McClure and I was wondering whether any of his wealth would come your way but in your letter you say not. Well never mind Janet … I had a letter from Jane McDonald a short time complaining greatly of Marnie for not paying her a visit when she was so near you. Do you think Marnie knew their

[792] For more on Janet, her marriage to Alexander Muckle and life at the Red River Settlement see https://www.redriverancestry.ca/MUCKLE-ALEXANDER.php.

whereabouts when she left you… With kind love and regards to Mr Muckle self and young folks. Believe me ever your afftly.

CC GUNN (signed)

Cecilia Cormack died 18 October 1906 in Rushworth, Vic. She died two months after the land where the old home had been flooded so she had moved in with her daughter Elizabeth and son-in-law Alexander Ingram. [793]

Waranga Park was sold by auction on 14 September 1953. William Gunn the younger had continued to run it – see his life – until 1921. Then his daughter Janettie and her husband ran it; she sold what was left of the Estate after her husband's death in 1953.[794] It then consisted of 2700 acres including frontage to the Waranga Basin dammed area.

The children of William Gunn

Summary
Rushworth events may have happened at Waranga; Rushworth was the official place of recording of the event.

- William GUNN of Waranga, b. 1804 Braehour, Caithness, d. 1888 Waranga
  - +Cecilia CORMACK, b. 1820 Wick Parish, Caithness, m. 1850 Aberdeen, Grampian, d. 1906 Rushworth
    - Margaret Elizabeth GUNN, b. 1850 Caithness, d. 1929 Hawthorn, Melbourne.
    - Janet GUNN, b. 1852 Wick Parish, Caithness, d. 1888 Waranga
      - +Alfred COLLIER, m. 1887 Melbourne
    - William GUNN, b. 1853 Wick Parish, Caithness, d. 1921 Waranga
      - +Julia Janet INGRAM, b. 1860 Rushworth, m. 1889 South Melbourne, d. 1957 Murchison
        - William Ingram GUNN, b. 1890 Rushworth d. 1891 Rushworth
        - Julia Janet 'Janettie' GUNN, b. 1894 Rushworth, d. 1992 Mooroopna
        - William GUNN, b. 1896 Waranga, d. 1896 Waranga
    - Elizabeth GUNN, b. 1859 Rushworth, m. 1888, d. 1921 Elsternwick, Melbourne
      - +Alexander INGRAM, b. 1845 Gambia, m. 1888, d.1909 Rushworth
        - Cecilia Catherine INGRAM, b. 1890 Rushworth, d. 1976, Murchison
    - Marie Elizabeth Gunn INGRAM, b. 1898 Rushworth, d. 1956 Queensland
  - Alexander GUNN, b. 1861 Waranga, d. 1915 Rushworth *dwi*
    - Cecilia Jane GUNN, b. 1863 Waranga, d. 1864 Waranga

[793] 'The Argus' Saturday 20th October 1906.

[794] From letters written in 1974 by Janettie Gunn which can be found on pages 447-448 of Donald Gunn and Alastair Gunn's *Scotland and Beyond; the Families of Donald Gunn (Tormsdale) and John Gunn Dalanaha, Strathmore and Braehour*.

Lives of the children

The children of William Gunn of Waranga and Cecilia Cormack were:

1. Margaret (Marnie) Gunn was born in October 1850 in Caithness. She was on the census of 30 March 1861 in the household of her uncle James and aunt Margaret Cormack in Sinclair Terrace, Pulteney East, Wick, Caithness.[795] She and her younger sister Janet emigrated in 1874 to Melbourne. It seems unusual that Marnie and her younger sister Janet waited so long to emigrate given their mother and brother William the younger left in 1857 - and first class. Marnie still lived at Rushworth in the 1909 electoral roll but later moved - she died, unmarried, on 16 September 1929 at 'Longford', Riversdale Road, Hawthorn, Melbourne in a large, two-storey Victorian home.[796] She was buried in the 'family vault' at Rushworth.[797]

2. Janet Gunn was born in 1852 in Wick Parish, Caithness. She was on the census of 30 March 1861 in the household of her uncle James and aunt Margaret Cormack in Wick Parish, Caithness. She and Marnie emigrated in 1874 to Melbourne.[798] Janet married Alfred Collier[799] in November 1887 at Waranga.[800] She died in 1888 at Waranga, with no issue.[801]

3. William Gunn[802] the younger was born in 1853 in Wick Parish, Caithness.[803] He married Julia Janet Ingram, daughter of Robert Ingram and Emma Gifford, in August 1889 in St Barnabas Church, South Melbourne.[804] Julia Ingram[805] was born in 1860 in Rushworth. She was a teacher in 1889 in Murchison, a town very near Waranga and Rushworth. She died in 1957 in Murchison.

   The Ingram family is of interest; Julia's grandfather Thomas Lewis Ingram[806] (1807-1868) was the acting colonial governor of the Gambia on five occasions. William's younger sister Elizabeth married Alexander Ingram in 1888. He was the son of the younger brother of Thomas Lewis Ingram. Alexander had been born in the Gambia. The Ingram land was very close to Waranga Park and probably abutted it – it had been left to Alexander and his brother Robert when their uncle Thomas Powell died. It is probable that various generations of closely linked Ingram families lived and worked on that land.

   William emigrated in 1857 to Melbourne with mother Cecilia. He (and Alexander Gunn, his younger brother) was named as a Lessee in Arrear under Section 20 of the Land Act 1869, of leases number 2970 Waranga and number 2730 Murchison on 1 April 1888. He was a beneficiary of the estate of William Gunn of Waranga on 20 December 1888 in the Supreme

[795] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[796] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[797] 'Rushworth Chronicle' 26 July 1929.
[798] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[799] Alfred Collier was a bank manager in 1887 in Rushworth.
[800] 'The Age' Thursday 10 November 1887.
[801] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[802] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[803] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[804] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[805] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[806] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Lewis_Ingram for the life and times of the man and his family.

Court of Victoria.[807] He was appointed as Manager of the newly gazetted Waranga Common on 24 February 1891.[808] He was Chair of the Waranga United Common committee in 1914[809] which implies earlier work on that committee.

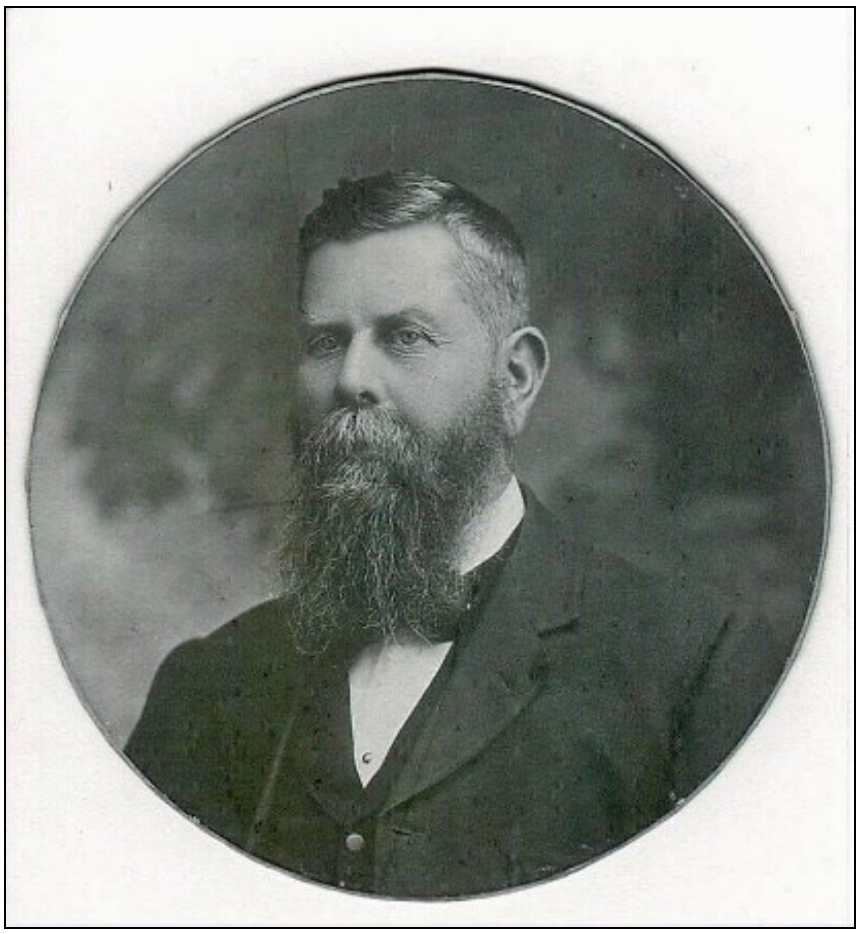
There were bushfires in the Rushworth district in February 1893 which cleared the Waranga Estate (and many other places) of all grass and fencing.[810] Other scattered fires occurred over the years but a huge fire occurred in February 1905 covering fifteen miles by six miles with consequent massive destruction to Waranga Park which lost all its grass, several hundred sheep including high priced stud ewes and rams, the woolshed, stables, fences and outhouse.[811] The 'homestead had a narrow escape, as the stable within a few yards of the house was demolished, and the men were all away from home to fight the fire, and were unable to return. The ladies of the house, however, worked hard for some considerable period, and were then helped by some of the neighbours.'[812] One feels the Gunns were comparatively lucky that day.

William was the Waranga Shire Councillor between 1896[813] and 1919 at Rushworth, and Shire President in 1899, again in 1908, and again from September 1914 to 1915. [814] His allowance was 2½ per cent of the Shire's gross revenue of 1914 – an interesting payment.[815]

William was also a member of the Repatriation Committee, a Commissioner for many years on the Echuca and Waranga Waterworks Trust, President of the Rushworth Mechanics Institute for over twenty years, Chief of the Caledonian Society of Rushworth and a member of the Council of the Victorian Scottish Union.[816]

William died on 16 November 1921.[817] His will left £16,668 pounds to his widow.[818]

[807] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[808] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[809] 'Murchison Advertiser and Murchison, Toolamba, Mooroopna and Dargalong Express' Friday 19 June 1914.
[810] 'The Herald' 13 February 1893.
[811] 'The Argus' Wednesday 4 January 1905. 'The Age' Saturday 19th November 1921 highlight his interest in merino wool production.
[812] 'The Age' Wednesday 4th January 1905.
[813] 'The Elmore Standard' Friday 7th February 1896.
[814] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[815] 'Shepparton News' Monday 7th September 1914.
[816] 'The Argus' Friday 18th November 1921.
[817] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[818] 'The Herald' Monday 23rd January 1922.



William Gunn the younger

One obituary[819] read -

RUSHWORTH.
Quite a gloom was cast over the entire district when it became known that Mr William Gunn, J.P., of "Waranga Park," Waranga, had passed away after an illness of only a couple of days duration. When his condition did not improve Dr Utber was called in. He at once recognised the seriousness of the trouble, and Dr Florence (Mooroopna) and Dr W. E. Hewitt (Murchison) were called in consultation, and they later decided upon an operation. This was undertaken, but the patient did not survive it.

Deceased was the eldest son of the late Mr William Gunn, who established the old Waranga Homestead in the early days. The site of the old homestead became submerged in the Waranga Basin, but there are many, who remember it well, as it was only three miles from Rushworth, and situated on Gunn's Creek.

[819] 'Shepparton Advertiser' Thursday 24th November 1921.

Mr Gunn was a man of many parts taking an active interest for very many years in practically every public movement for the benefit of the district. For over 20 years he was a member of the Waranga Shire Council, and resigned the position of his own free will some 2 1/2 years ago. Through all his public and private life also, he maintained a degree of straightforwardness and general uprightness of character which gained for him the respect and goodwill of all who knew him, and he was a man who was known far and wide. He was a Chief of the Rushworth Caledonian Society and was president of the Rushworth Mechanics' Institute for over 20 years. He was an active member of the local Repatriation Committee, and for many years filled the position of commissioner of the old Echuca and Waranga Waterworks Trust when the present irrigation scheme was in its Infancy. His death will be a sad blow …
A pathetic circumstance in connection with the death of deceased is the fact that he had already booked his passage for a trip to the land of his birth in February next in company with his daughter and two of his nieces. (His nieces Marie and Elizabeth did go to the United Kingdom in 1922 – but his daughter Janettie did not as she, along with her husband, took over the running of Waranga.)

Deceased was 68 years of age. The remains were interred in the Rushworth cemetery, the funeral being very largely attended, amongst the mourners being quite a number, of his late colleagues of the Waranga Shire Council. The Rev. Nelson conducted the service.

Children of William Gunn and Julia Janet Ingram were:

i. William Ingram Gunn who was born 6 December 1890 at Waranga.[820] He died on 4 January 1891.[821]
ii. Julia Janet (Janettie) Gunn was born 6 February 1894 at Waranga.[822] She married John Archibald Wyld McMillan, son of Robert Neil McMillan and Christina Wyld, on 5 September 1925 in the Holy Trinity Church, Oakleigh, Melbourne. John McMillan was born in 1900 at Murchison[823] and died in 1953 at Tatura. Janettie died in 1992 in Mooroopna, age 98.[824] She was the informant at the death of her brother Alexander on 31 Aug 1915 in Rushworth following injury he sustained after being thrown from a gig.[825]
iii. William Gunn who was born 25 September 1896 and died the following day.[826]

[820] For details See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[821] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[822] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[823] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[824] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[825] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[826] 'The Argus' Monday 28 September 1896.

4 Elizabeth Gunn was born in 1859[827] and died in 1921. She married Alexander Ingram (1845-1909) in 1888.[828] Children of Elizabeth and Alexander were:

i. Cecilia Catherine Ingram who was born in 1890.[829] She married William Tait, son of William Tait and Elizabeth Gunn Finlayson, in 1936 in Victoria.[830] William Tait was born in 1872 in Mt Prospect, Victoria [831] and he died in 1948 in Murchison, age 77.[832] Cecilia toured Britain in 1922 along with her sister Marie – this had been planned to do with her grandfather William the younger but he died before he could go. Cecilia also went again in 1955. She died in 1976, aged 86.[833]

ii. Marie Elizabeth Gunn Ingram was born in 1898. [834] Marie toured Britain in 1922 along with her sister Cecilia – this had been planned to do with her grandfather William the younger but he died before he could go. She married Frederick Esmonde King circa 1930. She died in 1957. Frederick Esmonde King was born in Roma Queensland in 1896, was a pastoralist by 1920 in Clermont, Queensland[835] and died at Townsville, Queensland in January 1986. How did Marie and Frederick meet?

5 Alexander (Tal) Gunn was born 11 January 1861 at Waranga.[836]
Alexander was involved in a legal dispute with Thomas Harrison concerning what seems to have been markers indicating ownership of land showing the border between the Gunn and Harrison properties around April 1901. Alexander was legally found to be in the wrong and fined in May, and was also found guilty of assault for the same event in June. Harrison had started both actions.[837] Thomas Harrison only had 25 acres and was an orchardist; the contrast in land size and purpose with the Gunns is obvious.[838] Alexander's behaviour seems odd given his obituary - which follows - which describes him as 'quiet, unassuming.' Was it an out of character action by Alexander or perhaps a grudge borne by Harrison, manipulated into court cases?

Alexander and his brother William were named as Lessees in Arrears under Section 20 of the Land Act 1869, of leases number 2970 Waranga and number 2730 Murchison on 1 April 1888. He was a beneficiary of the estate of his father William Gunn of Waranga on 20 December 1888.[839]

Alexander died on 31 August 1915 in Rushworth, unmarried, following injury sustained after being thrown from a gig whilst driving into the town with his niece Janettie.[840] One report[841] read:

[827] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[828] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[829] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[830] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[831] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[832] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[833] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[834] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[835] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[836] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[837] See 'Benalla Standard' Friday 31 May 1901 and 'The Age' Saturday 22 June 1901.
[838] 'Leader' Saturday 29th March 1902.
[839] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[840] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.
[841] 'Murchison Advertiser and Murchison, Toolamba, Mooroopna and Dargalong Express' Friday 3 September, 1915.

An accident, which, unfortunately, had a fatal termination, happened to Mr Alexander Gunn, of Waranga Park, on Friday afternoon last while driving to Rushworth with his niece (Miss Jeannette Gunn). It appears that they had just crossed the bridge, opposite where the old Foresters' Arms hotel stood on the Murchison road, when the horse suddenly shied and "propped" and Mr Gunn was thrown with great force on to the hard metal roadway. When thrown out Mr Gunn carried the reins with him and this left Miss Gunn in an unenviable predicament. The horse at once made off and Miss Gunn was soon thrown out. She, however, had a fortunate escape in that she received but a severe shaking and some minor injuries to the back, which necessitated her remaining in bed for a few days. On Mr Gunn being picked up it was at once recognised that he had been very seriously injured. Blood was running from his mouth, nose, and ears, and he was unconscious. He was taken to Mr George Anderson's residence and medical aid summoned as speedily as possible. Later he was taken home, but from the first little hope was held out for his recovery. He, however, lingered on unconscious until Tuesday evening, when he passed away.

The late Alexander Gunn was the second eldest son of. the late Mr Wm. Gunn, and was also a brother of Mr Wm. Gunn, of Waranga Park. Deceased was a native of Rushworth, having been born at the old Waranga Park homestead on the southern edge of Gunn's swamp, so named after his father. Here be grew up and continued to reside with his brother and other members of the family until compelled to remove to his late place of abode owing to the construction of the Waranga Reservoir. At the time of his death deceased was 54 years of age, and, although he took no part in public affairs, he was pretty widely known. He was one of those quiet, unassuming persons whose chief pleasures in life are derived from pottering about and minding their own affairs. He interfered with no one, and it can of a truth be said that no man was held in higher respect than the late Mr "Tal." Gunn. No wonder then that the news of his death was received on Wednesday morning with general expressions of regret, and the utmost sympathy was felt for his sorrowing relatives. The funeral, which took place yesterday afternoon was very largely attended.

The service at the graveside was conducted by the Rev. Ingram.[842]

6. Cecilia Jane Gunn was born in 1863 and died in 1864 at Waranga. [843]

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[842] Presumably the Reverend Ingram was a relative.
[843] See https://www.academia.edu/45595274/Hon_Donald_Gunn_of_Manitoba_Canada_1797_1878.

Donald Gunn J. P. - from Brawlbin, Caithness to Ballarat, Victoria, Australia 1832 – 1901

Donald Gunn

Brawlbin farm, 2011

INTRODUCTION

I have always been fascinated by my great great grandfather Donald Gunn; his presence has been a continual part of my life. There was, for example, always the framed image of him on a wall in my father's study.

Donald was part of the major wave of Scottish migrants who helped Victoria - then an independent colony, now part of Australia – in the mid to late 1800s hugely develop and whilst doing so he made a real impact on his local Ballarat community. And without Donald there would not have been his eldest son, the Honourable John Alexander Gunn, whose work inventing an anthrax vaccine suitable for Australian conditions was of national importance.

1. DONALD'S EARLY LIFE - THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND

Donald Gunn was born on 28 March 1832 at Brawlbin, Reay Parish, Caithness, Scotland.[844]
He was the eldest son – and second of five children - of Barbara Gunn in[845] Braehour and Alexander Gunn of Bualchork and Brawlbin. All the children died in Australia.[846] They were –

1. Catherine Gunn 1830 - 1912
2. Donald Gunn 1832 – 1901
3. Janet Gunn 1834 – 1913
4. John Gunn 1836 – 1854
5. William Gunn 1839 – died after 1858

Donald's mother Barbara was the second child[847] of (13.48) Donald Gunn of Braehour and Brawlbin and (14) Catherine Gunn in Osclay – Catherine descended from (8.11) Donald the Scholar Gunn. Donald Gunn descended from (9.15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn. Barbara and Alexander married on 19 March 1829 – she was nineteen years old; he was forty.

Donald's father Alexander was born in 1789 and had thought of migrating to join his uncle[848] William MacKenzie in Jamaica (who had been involved in the slave trade when he first arrived in that country) in 1817, but Alexander did not leave Scotland.[849] Alexander had a farm at Bualchork by 1821 and was

[844] Parish Records: Births 1832 Donald Gunn, parents Alexander, Brawlbin - Barbara; *Bible of Alexander Gunn*: Donald Gunn born 28 Mar 1832.
[845] The difference between the Scottish 'in' and 'of' is that 'in' meant you lived in a place but did not own or hold the lease of it - 'of' indicated that you owned or held the lease on the property. In other words, children were 'in' a place – normally the male parent would be 'of' a place.
[846] It is worth clarifying the history – in essence, for the purpose of this text, Victoria was an independent British Colony until the federation of Australia occurred on 1 January 1901.
[847] The oldest child was John Gunn of Durness, no Gunn named descendants now exist.
[848] William Mackenzie was the brother of Janet Mackenzie, who married Donald Gunn of Tormsdale. Janet was Alexander Gunn's mother.
[849] One of Alexander's brothers was Donald whose descendants include Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale 1837 - 1918 who was much involved with the Welsh shipping industry. His daughter Winifred married Francis Brodie Lodge who was a manufacturer and inventor of spark plugs as well as being a major collector of Chinese ceramics and bronzes.

also a successful shoemaker and saddle maker. By 1830 he had moved to Brawlbin farm, this was rented from the Forss Estate.

The real problem for Donald was that his mother died on 28 February 1844 and his father died on 29 March 1847 – his father had been in 'poor health' since at least January 1846. Donald was aged about fifteen at the time of his father's death and his older sister was around seventeen. The welfare state was not in existence – this situation could shatter a family.

Donald stepped up and became the 'man of the house.' Various receipts exist in the name of 'Donald Gunn Brawlbin' from January 1848, these include school fees for his three younger siblings, Poor Relief demands, a sizeable doctor's bill in 1852 and various other bills including a large amount for four and half gallons of whisky and porter in May 1853. As well, by March 1851 he was the named tenant farmer of the sixteen-acre farm.[850] Remember, Donald took on these responsibilities when aged fifteen - it must have been stressful.

Donald decided to emigrate to Australia by April 1853. He received a preliminary form from the 'Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners' and tried to be put on the List of Candidates for a Passage. This did not work – the rejection of the official passage was sent to him on 30 June 1853. Other letters exist to Donald from October 1853[851] detailing assorted extended family squabbles, these may have increased his desire to emigrate.

Emigration was certainly not unknown from the Highlands; Jamaica has already been discussed. As well, Donald's uncle Marcus Gunn emigrated to Sydenham, Owen Sound, Canada around September 1842. He married Barbara Mackay. His aunt Christian Gunn also emigrated to Canada with her husband Alexander Sutherland a few years later. Marcus and Christian lived close to each other and descendants exist for both siblings.

Donald continued to work towards emigration and was given a character reference by Finlay Cook the Minister of the Reay Free Church on 29 June 1854 and a second character reference was given by D. Campbell of Thurso on 3 July 1854. In it he says Donald was going 'to try his fortune at the diggings' so Donald, at least in public, had given his reason for emigrating to Australia. The Victorian gold rush which started in 1851 meant migration to there had become a much more visible option than Canada in the 1850s - the impact was that in the 1850s some 90,000 Scots migrated to Australia.[852]

There is one love poem addressed to Donald at 'Bralbin' saying he had fallen out of love with the girl poet – but Donald kept the poem. Did he break off the relationship as he knew he was going to emigrate? Had he really retained a soft spot for her?

[850] Census 30 March 1851: County of Caithness, Parish of Reay. Residents at Brawlbin. Donald Gunn head, unmarried 19, farmer, 16 acres, born Halkirk; Katherine Gunn sister, unmarried 20, general service, born Reay; Janet Gunn sister, unmarried 17, scholar, born Reay; John Gunn brother, unmarried 15, scholar born Reay; William Gunn brother, unmarried 12, scholar born Reay.
[851] It seems Donald had been to the Orkney Islands sometime in that year, being implied in a letter held by the author.
[852] Page 73, A. Inglis and P. T. Macdonald, *For Auld Lang Syne; Images of Scottish Australia from the First Fleet to Federation*

The main reason for Donald's migration was probably the need to accompany his sister. Catherine had been the childhood sweetheart of James Miller[853] of Wick who had worked on various ships between Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) and Norfolk Island in the late 1840s and early 1850s. He settled in Melbourne in June 1851, spent a year or so on the Ballarat goldfields and then moved to Geelong and established a coal yard and ship's chandlery on the proceeds from his time on the fields. He had mined about sixty ounces of gold for which he received about £4 an ounce. So that's £240; the average working man's wage in 1852[854] was about £100. In 1854 James sent for Catherine.

Donald and Catherine emigrated on 21 Aug 1854 from Liverpool, Merseyside, on the 'Herald of the Morning' which anchored off Melbourne on the 23rd of December 1854, presumably disembarkation occurred soon thereafter.[855] Given Donald had tried to be an assisted migrant but failed it is probable that James Miller sponsored / paid for the migration, especially as no further family papers / forms exist from the Emigration Commissioners.

James and Catherine were married on 12 March 1857 at Buninyong, Victoria, where Donald then lived. They had six children. Catherine was a servant and resident at Geelong at the time of her marriage.

Donald's younger brother John had earlier emigrated to Australia and arrived around October 1853 when he was aged about seventeen. He died at Rosehill, Moonee Ponds, Melbourne on 10 January 1855. The family story is that John died from sunstroke caught whilst waiting for Donald and Catherine's boat to dock. John wrote an account of his voyage to Australia which probably was similar for Donald and Catherine. John's account is

Monday July 11th Took steamer from Scrabster Roads to Glasgow and arrived there on Wednesday the 13th about 7 in the afternoon. I remained in Glasgow till 6 o'clock P.M. on Saturday when I took a steamer to Liverpool and arrived there about 8 o'clock P.M. on Sunday. Remained on shore until Thursday following when I embarked on Board the ship Tasmania which was then hauled out of the Docks and lying in the River Mersey. The ship lay here again until Wednesday the 27th July when she weighed anchor and was tugged out of the Harbour by two steam boats the last of which left the following morning at Holy-Head when we were left to beat up the English Channell - it was a fine day + we were in high spirits. On the 29th it commenced to blow right ahead and a great many of the Passengers sea sick I myself was very sick for some days. For the four following days we were beating up the English channel the wind always blowing ahead until on Tuesday the 2nd Augt when we neared the Bay of Biscay and it fell calm and continued so all day but on the 3rd a smart breeze sprung up which carried us along at a beautiful rate and from this to the 9th we had splendid weather and all passengers were again well. there are a great many Highland people on Board and we had Music and

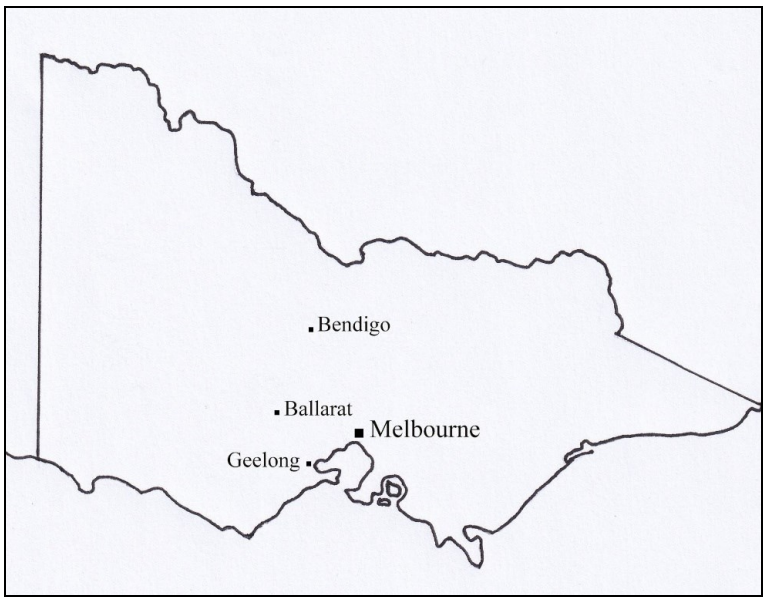
[853] Information derived from *The James Miller Story*, a company history. James Miller expanded from running his Geelong businesses into creating a massive ropemaking business in Emerald Hill, Melbourne in 1862, called 'Miller's Ropes.' In 1962 it was still operating, still family run and was Australia's largest manufacturer of rope, cordage and associated products.
[854] See https://www.sbs.com.au/gold/story.php?storyid=66 accessed 12 November 2020.
[855] The passenger list for the 'Herald of the Morning' records the only Donald Gunn of the approximate age to arrive between late 1854 and early 1856. It reads - John Raps(?), 22; Walter Williamson, 20; John Sutherland,19; Hugh Murray, 22; Donald Gunn, 27; Barbara Gunn, 29 and Hugh Matheson, 36, all berthed together. William Watkins Gunn – the second son of Donald Gunn and Jane Surman – has written that Donald and Catherine travelled together. It is unclear why Catherine travelled under her mother's name.

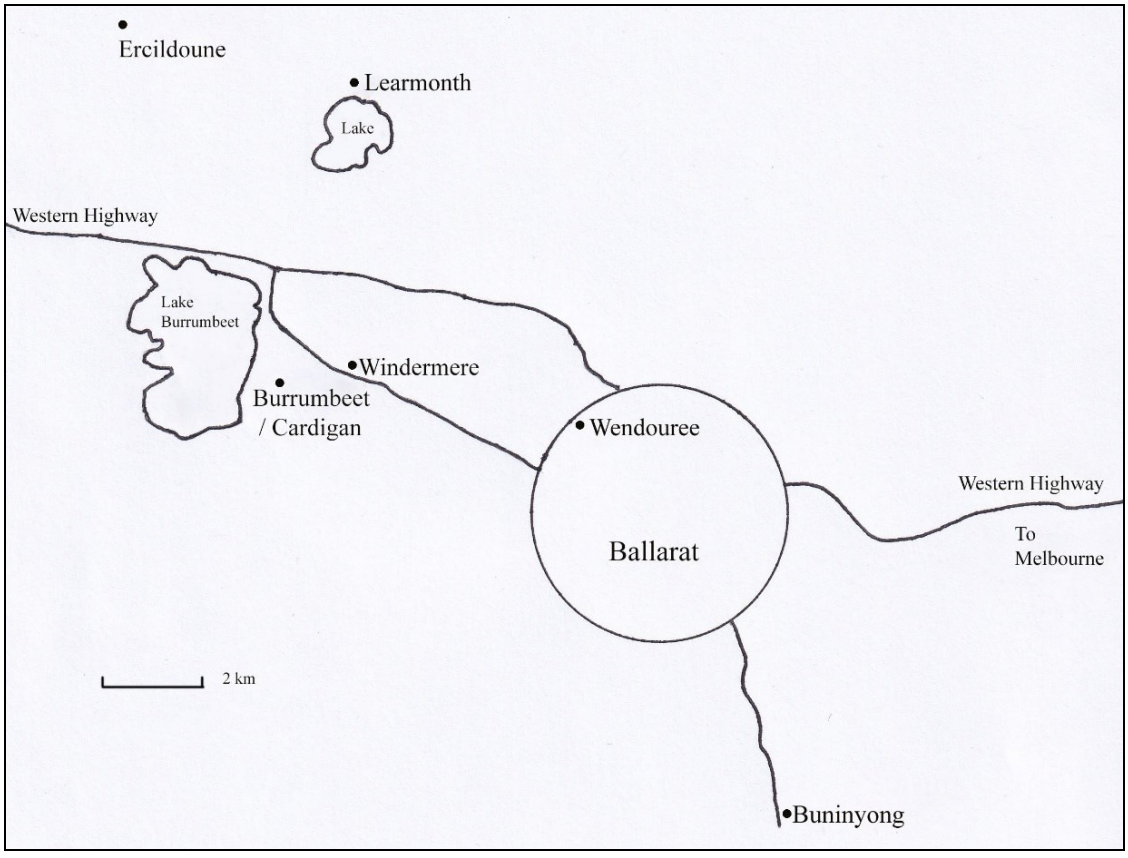
Dancing every good evening in which I joined considering it best for the health to take a little exercise. On Tuesday the 9th the wind shifted a little ahead of us. Today we saw the Island of Porto Santo which belongs to the Portuguese. It is a wild (mild?) *looking spot we saw two small boats as if they were fishing between us and the shore. 10th and 11th Very calm and doing little progress. On the 12 we came in sight of the Island of Medeira and passed about 8 miles to the east of it. 13 we had little wind but on Sunday the 14th we had a .... breeze. There were a great many fishes seen today and although it was Sunday the sailors and Passengers some of which I am sorry to say were Scotch tried with hook and spear to catch some. They did catch five of them and immediately gutted and Boiled and ate them. They were called Albacors and weighed about 30lbs each. However I did not touch them. On Monday the 15th we had a nice Breeze of Fair Wind nothing between 9 and 10 knots an hour. Passed the barque Jane of Aberdeen bound for Melbourne in Lat 31 N. On 16th the splendid screw steam ship Sidney passed us. She sailed from London on the 4th Augt and was bound for Sidney and passed steaming under a cloud of Canvas about 3 O'Clock in the afternoon. On Wednesday the 17th we entered the Tropics about 11 O'Clock am. It is now getting very warm. 17th and 18th. Good Breeze of fair wind several ships in Company but we left them all in a short time. 19th. Very Calm and at night it was the most beautiful sight I ever saw there was several ships in view and the sea was as smooth as glass. Saturday the 20th. Steward was today put in irons in consequence of his refusing to execute certain orders of the Commander. On the 21st, 22nd + 23rd we had fair wind and going very well. On the 24th it rained heavily for the first time since we left Liverpool and the passengers were eagerly engaged in catching as much of it as they could for washing with it. A child died today of the measles and committed to a watery grave about 4 O'Clock in the afternoon by the Carpenter after a funeral sermon was read by the surgeon. Immediately afterwards the passengers sang a hymn. On the 25th it was very blowy with some flashes of Lightning in the evening. It is now very warm + I can scarcely sleep in my berth with my clothes at all on me. We walk the Deck with nothing but our trowsers and shirt on and still it is very oppressing the heat. I can scarcely bear to put my naked hand on any article exposed to the sun about 12 noon. The sun is now over our heads. Friday the 26th. Very calm with some showers of rain. 27th High winds not at all favourable. On the 28th, 29th, 30th we had very good weather but the heat very great and suffering a great deal from thirst the water very bad and not drinkable without vinegar or something to take away the taste and smell. We are all divided in 6 messes + take a day about in cleaning the berths and cooking for each mess. On Wednesday the 31st we were all ordered by the Captain on Deck from 10 to 12 noon to allow the 'tween Decks' to be aired. 1st 2nd + 3rd very varyarorable weather but on the 4th we fell in with the Trade winds which are favorable. Monday 5th September. Splendid breeze going 10 + eleven knots an hour. Tuesday 6th. Blowing very strong but wind very favorable going at the rate of 14 Knots an hour and continued this way for some days but on the 12th we were obliged to go under double reefed top sails. I should have observed that that we crossed the line on the 3rd and the event was celebrated by the usual custom of shaving among the crew and passengers. 13th 14th and 15th Weather milder though the swell of the sea and the rocking of the ship made it almost impossible to walk the Decks. 16th Good weather and going well the weather is now getting colder. 17th Still good weather. 18th It commenced to blow against us and continued so for two days a tremendous quantity of sea fowl observed such as Cape Pidgeons and Albatrosses some of the latter measure from wing to wing the length of from 8 to ten feet. On the 20th we passed the Cape of Good Hope at a distance of 800 miles from it to the south. From this to the 1st of October we have very changeable and rough weather which made it very difficult to write. On the*

2nd October the wind changed in our favour and we run by log the great distance of 340 miles in 24 hours but shipped several seas which washed all the decks. 3rd + 4th Very heavy sea with strong wind. Lost our main top stansail. Wednesday 5th Our miser (?) *top Gallant yard gave way and broke through the middle. The carpenters were immediately engaged in making a new one and were helped by some Carpenters and Joiners on Board. Thursday 6th Heavy sea, ship labouring much shipping heavy seas. We got our yard rigged early in the morning but about 12 noon a sea struck the ship lurching her in such a manner as to break her miser mast into three pieces + Down came itself yards and sails bringing down with it in its course our Maintop gallant and Royal yards. Nothing could exceed our Consternation + surprise when we saw our ship so suddenly disabled. All hands were immediately engaged in clearing the deck and the carpenters got such help from the Passengers that the ship was soon put to rights. 7th 8 9 + 10th Got fair wind and going very well 11th Blowing rather strong. 12th Saw a ship bound to Melbourne with Passengers 115 days out we soon left sight of her she sailed from London. 13th and 14th Fair wind + going well. 15th Passengers today collected a subscription among them for to present the Captain on their arrival at Melbourne with some token of their respect. 16th Wind rather contrary but still on the right course. 17th + 18th Fair wind. 19 + 20 Fair wind and drawing near land. 21st This morning early the news was that the land was in sight and everybody was on Deck. 22nd Coasting along the Australian shore. 23rd Early this morning came in sight of Port Phillip Light House. We then got a Pilot and sailed up the straits for Melbourne where we arrived and cast Anchor three miles from the town at 2 O'Clock in the afternoon. The Custom House Officers came immediately on Board with the Inspector. We lay at Anchor here all night and next morning and this morning Tuesday the 25th there was steam boats come to fetch us ashore. Melbourne is a strange Place. Two men was hanged yesterday and other two are to be hanged today. Wages is very good yet. I did not get any job yet but I expect to get one soon. This is now a sketch of the Passage and I hasten to inform you of my safe arrival Dear Uncle. There was no sickness on Board but 7 children died of the measles +c and we had three Births. We arrived 2 hours after the Gildfinder* (?) *who sailed from Liverpool 5 days before us. Mc Williamson's* (?) *little Neil died also on the voyage. I will write you again soon with all the news.*

I am My Dear Uncle, your affect nephew, John Gunn 25th Oct 1853
I was not a day sick since I left home but a little sea sick at first. Passage 88 days.

2.VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA





The Ballarat region of Victoria.

2.1. BUNINYONG

It is not clear what Donald did after his arrival in Victoria in late December 1854 but his acquisition of an abattoir on leased land by late 1857 at Buninyong, near Ballarat, shows he had a reasonable amount of money and his lifestyle in Scotland suggests that the money did not come from there. To earn the money Donald may have worked[856] for James Miller, he may have worked on the goldfields, he may have worked in Melbourne or on farms and if he worked on farms it would probably have been in the Melbourne-Geelong-Ballarat triangle. Alternatively, Donald could have worked on all these options – or none.

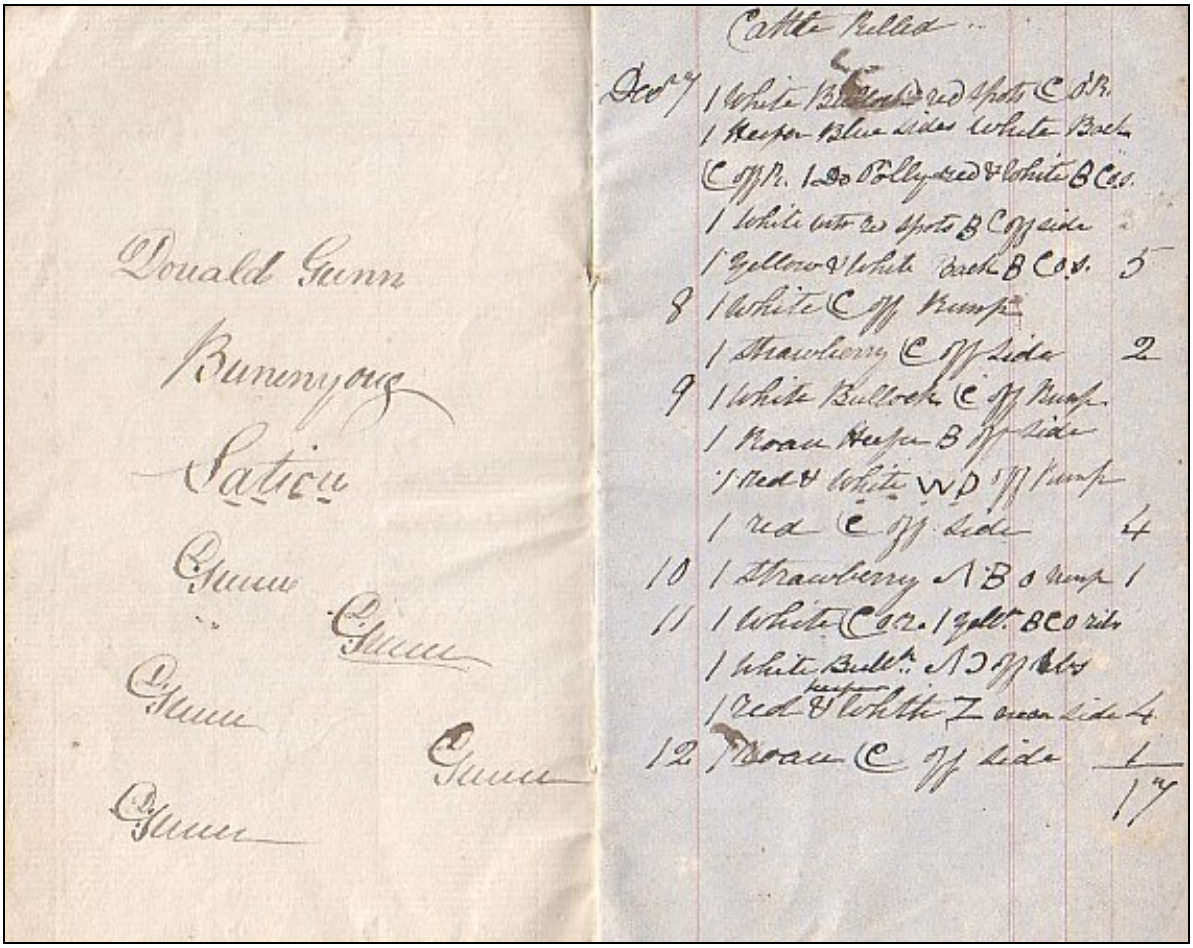
Buninyong, although now a minor town near Ballarat, was the earliest inland community in Victoria being initially settled – other than by First Nation Australians - by the Scottish Learmonth brothers in 1841 who were very much involved with Merino sheep farming. The Learmonth brothers also had the large estate of Ercildoune[857] which is close to Ballarat, Donald later leased a farm next door to this property. Donald would have felt at home in this area - one estimate[858] is that three quarters of the pastoral pioneers of Victoria were Scottish.

Land tenure was a contentious issue in Victoria in the nineteenth century. Originally Australia was viewed as virgin country. This meant the first white settlers could claim massive amounts of land, which is what the Learmonths had done. These land runs needed a yearly licence by the late 1840s. The problem was that change was needed to provide security of tenure but equally such rural land – basically sheep runs - did not pay their way in taxes when compared with urban areas and nor did they provide the variety of foodstuffs required for a growing population. These competing issues meant a mixed bag of quick-changing laws by short-lived governments in the 1840s and early 1850s with a focus on which Government rural land could be leased and which sold. The sold land was mainly for use by schools, churches, roads, railways, houses on rural farms, mining and other such infrastructure.
Once gold was discovered the problem of tenure was magnified due to the consequential massive population increase. The solution was that the Government allowed the massive sheep-dominated Estates to continue but also allowed significantly more rural land to be leased. The person leasing such land generally had first refusal when the lease came up for renewal and in some cases could even buy the land. So the Government came up with a decision which kept the competing land-hungry sides happy.

Donald's abattoir had some link with the local Pound as Donald killed two animals for it in the December 1857 – January 1858 period. It was a busy six days a week business – for the period 7 December 1857 to 9 January 1858 the abattoir killed sixty-six cattle (including three on Christmas Day) and 581 sheep were 'sold'. Did Donald run something of a saleyard for animals or was 'sold' in his accounts just a shorthand word for killed? The abattoir had previously been run by the Learmonth brothers.[859]

[856] Scottish 'family capitalism' in Victoria and elsewhere is well known. See https://journals.openedition.org/abe/5822 accessed 15 November 2020.
[857] The original spelling was without an 'e' see https://journals.openedition.org/abe/5822 accessed 15 November 2020.
[858] See http://home.vicnet.net.au/~buninhis/newsletters/2014_jun.pdf - the figure used is from Margaret Kiddle's *Men of Yesterday*.
[859] Was the link why Donald's later property at Burrumbeet was next to the Learmonths' Ercildoune Estate?

Donald had sublet the business by 1867, but the lease still had two years to run and remained in his name.



Being part of Donald Gunn of Buninyong Station's abattoir account book.

A description[860] of the site in December 1867 is of interest although it was then run by a Mr Kelsall -
The works are not very large, and at a distance there are no signs perceivable of any great manufacturing industry. It is a rather venerable cluster of weatherboard and shingle buildings about which the visitor speedily discovers ocular and olfactory signs of the mysteries going on within. Entering the yard, the visitor sees a heap of refuse in which a sow and litter of pigs are burrowing with industrious satisfaction. The heap consists of bones, horns, and bits of meat which have passed through the boiler. The bones snap easily, and seem almost calcined by the great heat to which they have been subjected. The bits of meat are in shreds, having been literally boiled to rags. Passing on we come to a lorry loading with great casks of tallow, and we scent everywhere a potent odour of fat, blood, wool, and soap, through all which there seems to run a stream of pollution, as a smell of decaying animal matter makes itself prominent, though not unbearably so even to a stranger. To the people employed on the spot the odours prevailing are no doubt hardly noticeable, perhaps they are even pleasant. Inside

[860] Page 5, 'The Ballarat Star' 16 December 1867.

the works we find Mr Kelsall, junior, who courteously shows us over the establishment and gives, or procures for us, all the information we require. He takes us at once to the place where the terrible initial rites of the mysteries of the house are performed. This is a platform where the killers do their bloody business. We go up a slippery ladder to a slippery floor, and out upon an enclosed platform where there are four butchers, with sleeve-less bloody arms, knives in hand or mouth, and ankle deep in warm gore. Below is a paddock or pen for sheep, and connecting the paddock with the platform is an inclined way, up which. the sheep have to make their march to anything but " dusty " death. A score or two of sheep stand huddled together on the platform yet unkilled, a half dozen lie dead with their throats gaping, one man is wrenching the skin from one carcase, one is disembowelling a sheep, one is hewing another sheep in pieces. There is a reeking of warm blood, an oozy, slippery feeling of blood wherever one puts his foot, and a retreat from the horrible place is beaten as quickly as possible. If we did not we should see the butchers at their quick murderous work. There lies a heavy axe or adze, all wet with blood, close by. With this they knock the sheep on the head, a dozen or so at the time, and then cut their throats. As we go off the platform into another place, we see the floor scattered with sheep carcases—headless, tailless, and legless.

Turning round we see a heap of heads, and close by there hang rank after rank of legs of mutton. Perhaps fifty—perhaps four times that number. These go to the butchers, the Ballarat market absorbing most of them. All the rest of the animal, head, tail, feet, horns, body, viscera—everything but the wool and skin, goes into the boiler. This is a big cauldron of 8 1/2 feet diameter and 10 1/2 feet deep, water and heat to which are supplied by a furnace and boiler close by. This awful pot will take 350 reduced carcases into its maw, and in eight hours, with a pressure on the boiler of 2 lb to the inch, the cauldron is ready to be discharged of its fat, which is run off to the coolers and casks. When cool it is white, though not quite equal to the best mutton tallow, which is composed of fat only without any admixture of the oil which comes from the flesh and extremities of the animal. After the fat has been run off there remains the flesh, which has been reduced to as sort of pulp. This is taken out and run along a tramway out of doors, where there is a screw press into which it is thrown and all the remaining grease squeezed out. The pulp and its contained debris of bones and horns are then thrown into the yard, and pigs feed and burrow in it with gluttonous delight. We now go to those parts of the works where the skins and wools are disposed of. Here are Mr Seymour, the head of the fellmongers, and his eleven or twelve assistants. Still everything is slippery, greasy, odorous, but happily not now horrible like the first place we saw. Creeping with bent backs through damp, oozy, greasy places we see out in the bright sunlight white beds of wool spread out to dry. But we go first to where Mr Seymour is, for he will tell us all about the skins and the wool. Here he stands on slippery boards beside a slippery vat hull full of what looks like a mixture of soap suds and pea-soup. In a shed close by are two pelters or fellers working away for their lives at sheepskins, scraping them clean of all wool left on them. We learn that the skins are brought from the platform of horrors and put to soak in the water pits for 24 hours, then in another pit of water, then they are taken into the sweating-house to loosen the wool from the skins and make the work of detachment more easy. We peeped into the sweating-house. It was slippery, greasy, dim, warm, full of pendant woolly skins, and over the floor and dropping from the pendant skins there swarmed fat white maggots in myriads. From the sweating-house the skins are taken to the fell mongers, who strip the pelt and sort the wool into six sorts. From the strippers the wool goes to the scourer, who puts it into a vat of hot water and hard soap; after that

it is put into pure cold water, and then is taken to the drying grounds, each sort on its proper sheet or floor. In winter drying is hastened by hot air pipes placed in a room for the purpose. When dried the wool is put into a screw-press, and packed in bales ready for the market. We saw the whole process, or rather the scene and implements of the whole process, from the killing-place to the pressing and packing place, a pile of ready packed bales standing by the press ready for despatch to market. Besides the wool that comes from the skins there are fleeces sent by sheep owners to be washed and picked; and it was these that looked so white and glittering upon the drying grounds. Mr Kelsall boils down for sheep owners at a rate per sheep of one shilling, plus certain offal. His works are hardly yet in full trim; but he expects to be able to dispose of 500 sheep a day, the supply being equal to that daily amount of slaughter. The season commenced about a fortnight ago and lasts about three months. At this place sheep only, and not cattle, are boiled down. In the pre-auriferous days the Messrs Learmonth carried on the boiling-down business on this spot, and Mr Kelsall was for years their manager. Since then he has been soap-making, five tons per week being made from fat obtained from the butchers. This business is now carried on at a shed about 300 yards off the boiling-down works, but we saw great piles of bars of soap in the latter place also.

By this time there was a secondary part of the abattoir business on one hundred and twenty-five acres of land leased from Donald at Windermere, near Cardigan / Burrumbeet near where Donald had moved to around 1860.

But Donald did not give up all his links to Buninyong. A major incident occurred in September 1867 when two drovers drowned driving a mob of cattle and flock of sheep for him to the abattoir; one was the elder brother of the Mr Kelsall to whom Donald had sublet the business.[861]

Donald was also actively involved in Buninyong as late as June 1868 – he chaired a meeting of the Buninyong Constitutional Association which was part of many such meetings in Victoria arguing about the laws of the day. The Constitutionalists were concerned that the law was the law; the alternative view was that laws were wrong due to not having universal male suffrage. The key point is Donald's central role as Chair; he seems never to have been a quiet bystander. His politically conservative position is also obvious.

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[861] 'The Argus' 28 September 1867.

A major recreational activity for Donald at this time was with the Buninyong Highland Society[862] of which he was the Foundation Secretary. The Buninyong Highland Society[863] was the first Highland Society established in Victoria and it started in 1857. The Society's Standing Rules[864] make for interesting reading with its mix of social activity and co-operative help –

STANDING RULES
OF THE
HIGHLAND SOCIETY BUNINYONG

Rule 1st. It is imperative that Forty Pounds Sterling (£40) (the directors having power to add thereto) be secured out of the funds of the Society at the beginning of every year for the next Anniversary.

" 2nd. That this money be paid in prizes, as the directors shall see most fit for the promotion of their anniversary meeting.

" 3rd. That the anniversary shall be held on the 1st January, (New Years Day) unless that such day happens to be Sunday, in which case the following Monday to be appropriated for the Gathering.

" 4th. That any Funds available to the Society after the appropriation of the aforesaid sum be applied to Charitable purposes alone.

" 5th. Any Member of the Society in distress through sickness, or accident presenting his case to the directors, shall upon their being satisfied that he is a deserving object, receive such releif as his case requires or the funds of the Society permit.

" 6th. In case of there being no available funds, and a member applying for assistance, that the directors be empowered to call a Meeting of the Members in order that steps may be taken to afford immediate relief.

" 7th. That at the decease of any member of this Society, Five pounds Sterling (£5) be given to defray expenses.

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[862] As well as Donald being involved with the Buninyong Highland Society he *might* have been involved with the (Ballarat) Caledonian Society 'The Caledonian Society was formed in November, 1858, and the first sports were held on New Year's Day, 1859, on what is now known as the Eastern Oval. Mr Hugh Gray was the first president, and with him as judges on that day were Charles Roy, Donald M'Donald and Donald Gunn ....'. Page 307, Walter Withers, *The History of Ballarat from the First Pastoral Settlement To The Present Time.* The Ballarat Caledonian Society continued to run Highland Games over the years - for example a Donald Gunn is recorded as a judge for the Highland Fling, the Best Dressed Highland Boy, Best Dressed Highlander and Tossing the Caber at the New Year's Day 1861 meeting so it is reasonable to assume a fairly continuous participation in these Games by a Donald Gunn for some time. See Page 2, 'Geelong Advertiser' 3 Jan 1861. I suspect this Donald Gunn was not the Donald Gunn who is the subject of this book; 'our' Donald Gunn is central in all Societies of which he was a member and not a peripheral judge. As well, 'our' Donald Gunn was fully involved with the Buninyong Highland Society and would have had little time to become involved in the physically distant Ballarat Caledonian Society. Also, other Gunns are known in Ballarat at this time so another Donald Gunn is a reasonable possibility. There is also no family paperwork relating to the Caledonian Society suggesting 'our' Donald was not involved in it.

[863] See http://home.vicnet.net.au/~buninhis/newsletters/feb_06.html for a full history of the Society.

[864] See http://home.vicnet.net.au/~buninhis/ accessed 12 February 2006 for discussion about the society and the games over time.

" 8th. That at the decease of any member of this society, Fifteen Pounds Sterling (£15) be paid to his widow, or lawful children (Funds being available for this purpose).

" 9th. That if the deceased leave no widow or lawful children that the aforesaid sum be placed in the funds of the Society.

" 10th. Any member who has not paid into the Society for nine clear months, shall forfeit all right and claim to all or any of the benefits set down in the foregoing rules.

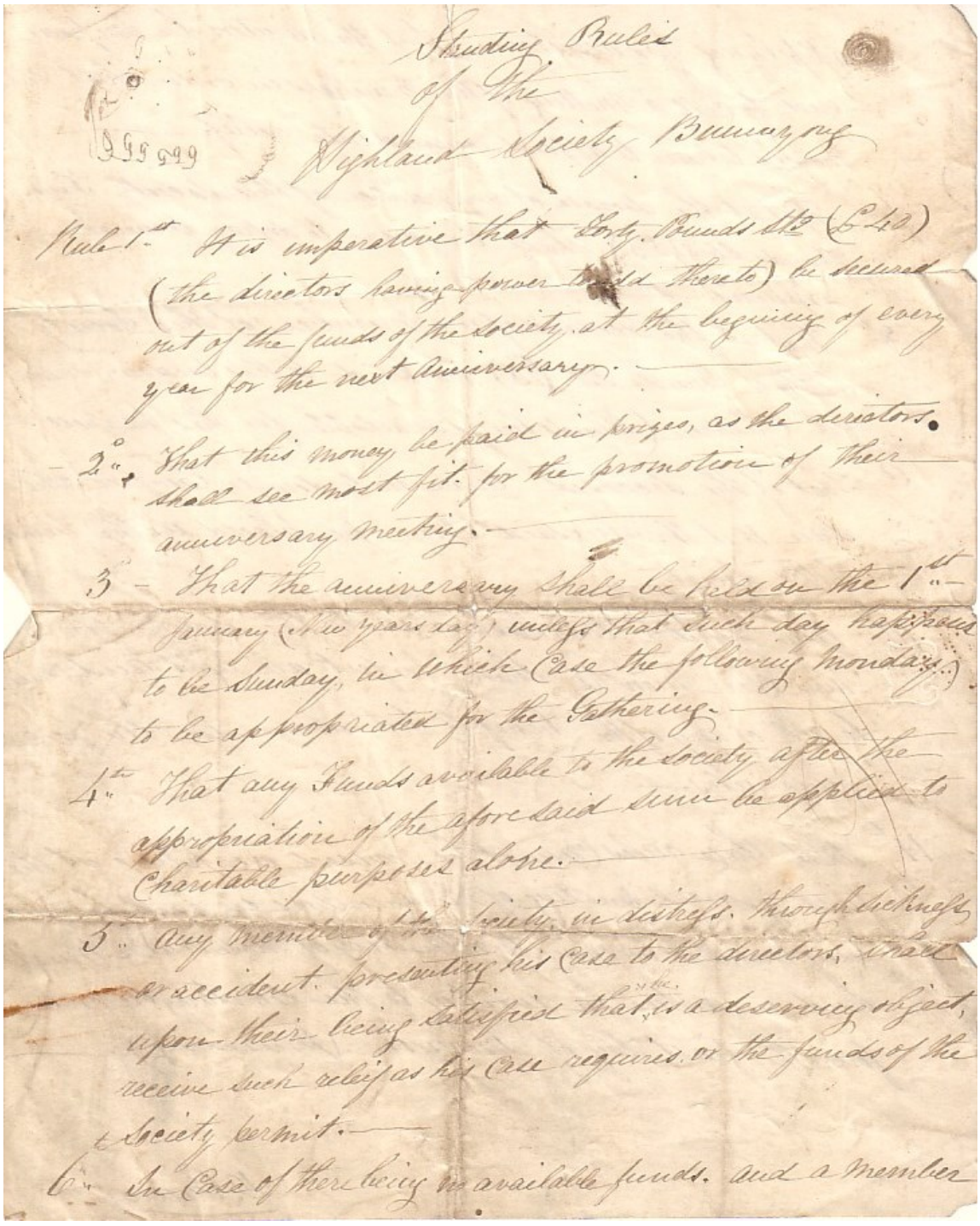
11th. That these rules cannot be revised excepting at the first general meeting of the members in each year, any member wishing to alter any of these rules must send in notice in writing to the Secretary on or before the first day of December, (preceding).

(Sgd. D. Gunn)

List of Members for the H. S.

Donald Stewart, Hugh A. McMillan, Donald Gunn, Dugald Cambell, Thomas J. Finlay, Charles Lameret, James McCrew, T.C. McDonald, John Connell, John Kennedy, Eneas Cameron, McLenan, McInnis

Standing Rules of the Highland Society (of) Buninyong, original document



Standing Rules
of the
Highland Society Buninyong

Rule 1st It is imperative that Forty Pounds Stg (£40) (the directors having power to add thereto) be secured out of the funds of the society, at the beginning of every year for the next Anniversary.

2nd That this money be paid in prizes, as the directors shall see most fit for the promotion of their anniversary meeting.

3rd That the anniversary shall be held on the 1st January (New years day) unless that such day happens to be Sunday, in which case the following Monday is to be appropriated for the Gathering.

4th That any Funds available to the society after the appropriation of the afore said sum be applied to Charitable purposes alone.

5th Any member of the Society in distress through sickness or accident presenting his case to the directors, shall upon their being satisfied that it is a deserving object, receive such relief as his case requires or the funds of the Society permit.

6th In Case of there being no available funds and a member

applying for assistance. that the directors be empow-
-ered to call a meeting of the members in order that steps
may be taken to afford immediate relief. ——

7th That at the decease of any member of this Society Five
Pounds Stg (£5) shall be given to defray funeral
expenses. ——

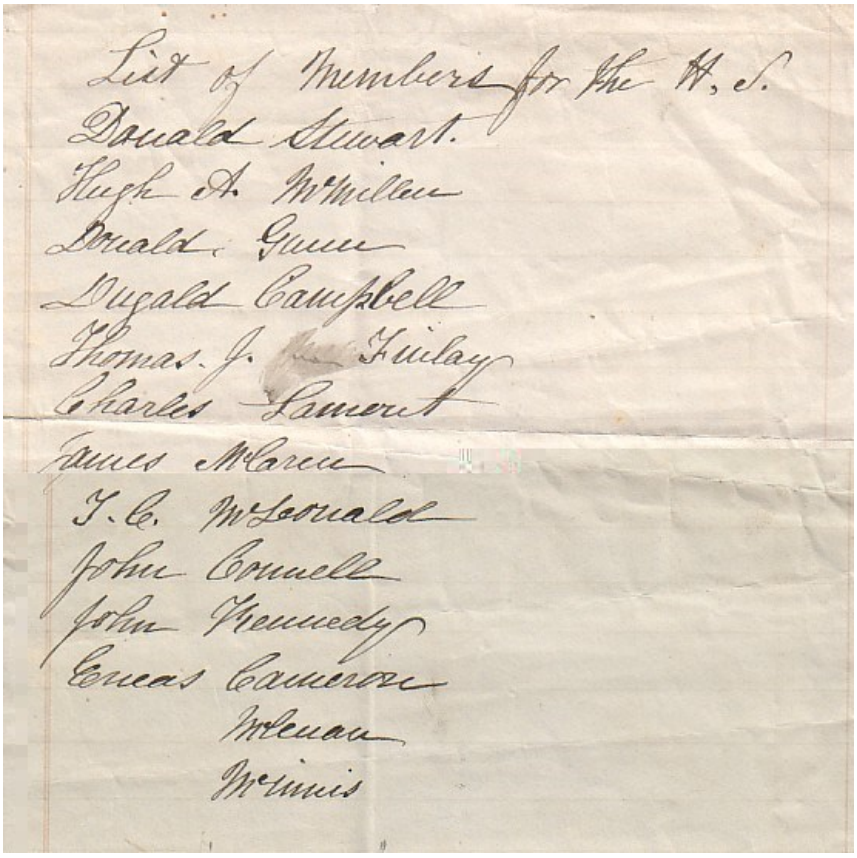
8th That at the decease of any member of this Society
Fifteen Pounds Stg (£15) be paid to his widow, or law-
ful Children (Funds being available for this purpose.

9 That if the deceased leave no widow or lawful chil-
dren that the aforesaid sum be placed in the funds
of the Society. —

10th Any member who has not paid in to the Society for
three clear Months shall forfeit all right and Claim
to all or any of the benefits set down in the fore-
going rules. —

11th That these rules cannot be revised excepting at the
first general meeting of the members in each year
any member wishing to alter any of these rules must
send in notice in writing to the Secretary on or be-
fore the first day of December (preceding). ——

D. Gunn.



List of Members for the W. S.
Donald Stewart.
Hugh A. McMillan
Donald Gunn
Dugald Campbell
Thomas J. Finlay
Charles Laurent
James McCaw
J. C. McDonald
John Connell
John Kennedy
Eneas Cameron
McLean
McInnis

The Buninyong Highland Society's first 'sports and events' meeting was held at 1pm on 1 January 1858 on the ground below the Presbyterian school house at Buninyong. The President could not be there so Donald Gunn, as Secretary, ran the Games.

On 22 December 1858 the Society applied to the Buninyong Court for permission to fence a piece of common land between Hastie's Spring and Coleman's for the next, first real Highland Games. The applicants were Donald Stewart, Peter Hedrick, Mr McDonald and Donald Gunn.[865]

The second Buninyong Highland Gathering[866] was held on 3 January 1859. D. Gunn[867] was still the Secretary as well as the Gathering Controller and some eight hundred to a thousand people attended.[868]

A Melbourne newspaper report said –

The second gathering of this society, which took place yesterday in a paddock adjoining the Geelong road, about a mile beyond the township of Buninyong, was attended with much success. The day was calm and delightful, for the heat of the sun was pleasantly moderated by a cool sea breeze, which prevented those present from being oppressed by the weather. This fact was no doubt one of the great causes which produced an attendance of nearly all Buninyong has of pretty damsels, matronly dames, and stalwart men. Not a few Ballaarat men, too, were present, including most of those who joined in the Gathering on the Ballaarat cricket ground on New Year's Day, and tartan kilts, goat-skin sporrans and Highland caps, were nearly as numerous as on the latter occasion. There could not have been less than 800 or 1,000 people on the ground, who appeared to take the utmost interest in the proceedings. The arrangements, under the control of the energetic secretary, Mr. D. Gunn, were very good, as far as the clearing of the ground was concerned. A paddock was fenced in with palings, and no one was admitted but the competitors, the Committee, and a very few friends, mostly consisting of ladies. The Committee, in deciding upon this regulation, however, failed to provide proper accommodation for many ladies and gentlemen ineligible for admission within the sacred precincts without the payment of a guinea subscription, and who, therefore, were compelled to witness the sports from the hill afar off, at a manifest disadvantage. Not a few grumbled loudly; and it is to be hoped the Committee will in future have more confidence in their own popularity, and provide for a larger attendance. The Secretary, however, very wisely insisted upon the carrying out of the regulations, such as they were, in their integrity, and thus a clear space was kept, without disorder. No untoward event interfered with the pleasantness of the occasion. The spectators mostly belonged to the respectable classes of society; and though Mr. Armitage's booth was filled with thirsty souls the whole day, a drunken man or an angry word were hardly to be seen or heard, nor were the decisions of Messrs. Stewart, M'Lachlan, and Gray, who were the judges, in any way questioned.

The medals of the society, which ware exhibited on the ground, were of the most handsome description, and were manufactured, we were informed, in Geelong. On the obverse was the figure of a Highlander in full costume, with the motto "Lainh na cear tais," the whole surrounded with the words "Highland Society, Instituted 1857." The reverse was left blank to admit of the names of the winners being

[865] Public Records Office Victoria, VPRS 296/2
[866] Page 6, 'The Miner and Weekly Star' 7 January 1859.
[867] Page 6, 'The Argus', 5 January 1859.
[868] http://home.vicnet.net.au/~buninhis/newsletters/feb_06.html accessed 16 November 2020

engraved thereon. The day passed off in the most delightful manner, and though we were compelled to leave before the games were concluded, we doubt not the sports ended as pleasantly as they began.

For Donald's medal, as described above, see the next page. The Gathering realised £340 17s and gave a profit of £60.[869]

It seems Donald did not take any further part in the Buninyong Highland Society after July 1859. This is reasonable as he married in March 1859 (as is detailed in the next section) and certainly had moved to Cardigan / Burrumbeet near Ballarat by 1860 and took a great part in local activities there.

[869] Page 5, 'The Argus' 17 January 1860.

Donald was awarded a silver medal by the Buninyong Highland Society on 3 July 1859. He is inscribed as the 'Late Honorary Secretary' so obviously had resigned by then. The medal originally had a large silver brooch attached but this has been lost. The year the Society started (1857) is shown on the front. The diameter is approximately 2¼ inches.

2.2. CARDIGAN / BURRUMBEET

Personal

Soon after starting the abattoir business Donald married[870] Jane Surman (18 Jan 1836[871] – 14 Feb 1908), daughter of Daniel Surman and Mary Ann Watkins, on Friday 25 March 1859 in the Presbyterian school residence at Buninyong. They were married by the Reverend Hastie.

Back; *Donald 1865-1933, Barbara 1870-1941, John Alexander (JA) 1860-1910, Mary-Jane 1863-1934, Marcus Daniel 1868-1953*
Front; *William Watkins 1861-1935,* ***Donald*** *1832-1901, Arthur Gilbert 1878-1933,* ***Jane*** *(Surman) 1836-1908, Norman 1872-1944*
Very front; *Catherine Alexandrina 1880-1960*
This family photo was probably taken in 1884 when JA was visiting Ballarat.

[870] Certificate of Marriage, no.157 of marriages solemnized in the District of Buninyong, Donald Gunn, 26, bachelor, of Buninyong, farmer, married Jane Surman, 23, spinster, of Buninyong, teacher, on 25 March 1859.
[871] Jane Surman was born at Hampton Poyle, Oxfordshire and was in the 1841 and 1851 censuses for that village.

• John Alexander (called 'JA' in his time) was born 11 February 1860 at Buninyong and died 21 September 1910 in Sydney, New South Wales. He left home in 1878 to be a jackaroo at South Yalgogrin Station (a large sheep farm) near Ardlethan in outback New South Wales. By 1886 he was Manager of it after having been the Overseer. JA became a pioneer colonial scientist and bought Borombola Station in the Wagga Wagga region of New South Wales. He then moved to Braehour Station in the same area. His work in creating a vaccine (in conjunction with his wife) for anthrax suitable for Australian conditions deserves greater recognition. He married, with descendants. He was a member of the New South Wales Parliament.

JA's wife was Jessie Marie Turner (born July 1862), son of the Scot William Turner[872] who played a prominent role as banker in the Melbourne 1880s land boom period. William Turner had been an unpaid teacher at Buninyong from 1 October 1862 to 31 December 1862 – it is probable that a friendship developed with the Gunns as how else would his daughter who was a high society, well-educated Melbourne girl (she went to P.L.C. and matriculated in Algebra, Geometry, English, French, German, Arithmetic, Geography and Elementary Physics), get to know JA let alone marry him in 1886? She also deserves more recognition as she looked after JA's laboratory.

• William Watkins was born 26 December 1861 at Cardigan and died 24 June 1935 at Crossover, Gippsland, Victoria. He married, with descendants. After initially working for JA at South Yalgogrin William moved to Gippsland by 1884 and established a sawmill business there.

• Mary Jane was born 18 January 1864 at Cardigan and died 7 May 1934 at Werribee, Victoria at her younger sister Barbara's house called Braemore. Mary Jane was unmarried. She was in charge of the housekeeping and the children at JA's Borombola Station by 1897 and probably earlier. She was a licensed vaccinator of the anthrax vaccine by 1903.

• Donald was born 20 November 1865 at Burrumbeet and died 29 December 1933 at Crossover. He married late and had no descendants. Donald was working at Crossover by 1899. He is recorded as a timber worker at the time of his death. He mined gold near Buchan at some point.

• Marcus Daniel was born 11 May 1868 at Burrumbeet and died 1 December 1953 at South Yarra, Melbourne. He married, with descendants. Marcus worked at JA's Borombola Station near Wagga Wagga as early as 1888 and was acting Manager there by 1903.

• Barbara was born 20 June 1870 at Burrumbeet and died 17 July 1941 at Werribee South, Victoria. Schoolteacher. She married, with descendants.

• Norman was born 11 May 1872 Burrumbeet and died 15 November 1944 in South Yarra, Melbourne. He was unmarried. He worked in 1903 at JA's Borombola station. He served in World War One at Gallipoli and later at the Somme in France where he was wounded. His occupation when

[872] William was born at Kirkconnel, Dumfriesshire, Scotland 3 October 1831 and died at Braehour on 14 November 1919. For more information see my *William Turner: Selected Writings*.

enrolling for the war was 'agent' - presumably an insurance agent. He was left permanently disabled after his wartime chest injury.

- Hugh, was born 28 October 1875 Burrumbeet and died 24 June 1879 at Burrumbeet.

- Arthur Gilbert was born 19 May 1878 and died 18 June 1933 at Ivanhoe, Melbourne. He married, with descendants. He worked in Kalgoorlie by 1905. By 1916 he was a businessman in Ballarat.

- Catherine was born 13 September 1880 Burrumbeet and died 13 August 1960 Melbourne. She was a member of the Australian Army Massage Service in World War One. She never married.

*****

The sister and brother Jane Surman and John Watkins Surman had emigrated with their parents in 1855 to Australia.[873] Jane and John ran, from 1857, the Buninyong Boarding School which was the first inland school in the Port Phillip District (as Victoria was called before it became a separate Colony from New South Wales). The school had both boarding and day pupils - the boarders were itinerant workers' children. It had been established by the Reverend Hastie of the Scottish 'Free' Presbyterian Church of Victoria with support from Thomas Learmonth. The Reverend Hastie later became Moderator[874] of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in 1865. It was a school during the week but a Church on Sunday until 1860 when a separate Church was built.

Given the lack of a Presbyterian Church at Buninyong, that the school was a Presbyterian boarding school, that Jane was a teacher and that the school had been set up by the Reverend Hastie one can see why Donald and Jane were married at the residence of that school.

Donald's younger sister Janet migrated in 1864 and married John Watkins Surman on 12 May of that year.[875] Janet may not have been very literate - certainly an early 1860s letter by her suggests that. She had looked after her grandfather Donald Gunn of Braehour and Brawlbin until his death in 1861, her grandmother Catherine Osclay Gunn (see Appendices 1, 2 and 3) and possibly others, in Scotland. Janet certainly had the idea of moving to Australia as early as September 1858 but various members of the extended family in Scotland were aware – it is shown in various letters held by the author - that they would be inconvenienced if Janet went to Australia so I suspect she had emotional pressure placed on her to stay in Scotland for an extended period. Janet and John married at 'Donald's farm' in Cardigan – see the following paragraph - according to the rites of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria; he was 33, she was 30. There are many descendants, mostly in Gippsland.

[873] Unknown newspaper, '... in 1855 he arrived in Victoria with his parents and only sister, the latter being Mrs Gunn, of Doveton Street North.'
[874] An earlier moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in 1861 was the Reverend Andrew Love of Geelong. His sister married William Turner who is discussed on page 20. The Reverend Love's grand-daughter was the celebrated female Australian World War One artist Iso Rae. The Reverend Love's brother John was a noted early Geelong and Melbourne photographer.
[875] John Watkins Surman arrived in Australia in 1855, taught at Buninyong in 1857, then moved in August 1860 to teach at Windermere State School for the nearly exclusively Presbyterian farming children and taught there until 1892. The school is now called Cardigan State School. John Watkins Surman was appointed as Postmaster at Cardigan 1 January 1861. By 1867 Donald is the named postmaster for Cardigan – see the next page.

'Donald's farm?' An undated provisional document has Donald buying / leasing a farm at Cardigan in partnership with John Watkins Surman, his 'double' brother-in-law for £250, paid by both of them, but bought in the name of Gunn. There was to have been a manager – this suggests it was not a farm at which Donald was expected to live. It makes sense that this document was probably written around the period 1857 - August 1860 when John still taught at Buninyong and whilst Donald ran the abattoir there in at least 1857 / 1858 and probably for some time after. I suspect the manager issue was readily solved – Daniel Surman, father of Jane Surman and John Watkins Surman, died 'at his late residence, the farm of Messrs Gunn and Surman'[876] on 21 October 1869. There is also a record of 'Surman's farm' in Cardigan in November 1865.[877] In other words, the Cardigan farm bought by Donald and John became the home of Donald's parents-in-law.

By 1860 Donald either owned or leased a farm in the Burrumbeet area[878] - it was no more than a mile from Lake Burrumbeet and adjoined the Ercildoune estate. The farm was of at least two hundred acres[879] and he probably stayed there for at least twenty-six years. It is possible that he first bought one farm, sold it and moved to another one nearby for twenty-years. A third alternative is that he initially lived at the joint Gunn / Surman farm at Cardigan which would make some sense if he was still commuting to Buninyong. This option would also explain why his second and third children were born at Cardigan. Donald was certainly the rate-payer of a Burrumbeet farm from at least 1865 to 1886. As already discussed, Donald also had some land at Windermere which was leased to the Buninyong abattoir by 1864.

Many letters exist to Donald from Scotland mainly concerned with assorted, detailed family gossip. It includes much on his sister Janet Gunn and how well she had - or had not - been treated in Scotland. And much on his two uncles and grandmother and the stresses of life in Scotland. But these letters are not seen after 1864. Did the Scottish Gunns stop writing or are the letters lost?

Donald applied on 6 June 1865 for twenty acres of unoccupied Crown land – called the Commons - at Windermere of which he was the manager. Windermere abuts both Burrumbeet (it is east of Burrumbeet) and Cardigan (being north of Cardigan). John Watkins Surman also made application as, separately, did Daniel Surman and Donald Campbell[880] (who was a very near relative of Donald Gunn). Donald Gunn's view was that the Commons should remain 'common land' for all but if that was not to be the case then it was within his right to apply.[881]

In 1867 Donald Gunn was the named person[882] for the Post Office at Cardigan, for how long it was in his name is not clear. Donald may have been the appointed Postmaster but I suspect it was his father and mother-in law who ran it as Cardigan matched where they lived; Donald by then was certainly

[876] Page 2, The Ballarat Star' 22 October 1869.
[877] Page 2, 'The Ballarat Star' 1 November 1865.
[878] The 1869 *Post Office Directory* lists Donald Gunn farmer twice (one above the other), once for Burrumbeet and once for Cardigan; was the Cardigan entry for his father-in-law's farm which was in Donald's name?
[879] 1867 figures.
[880] Donald Campbell was the son of May Gunn who was the younger sister of Barbara Gunn, Donald Gunn's mother. Donald Campbell is buried in the Gunn family plot in the Old Cemetery in Ballarat.
[881] Page 23, 'The Ballarat Star' 19 September 1865.
[882] https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Directory_for_Shires_and_Road_Boards_in/sWxZAAAAcAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=cardigan+burrumbeet&pg=PA7&printsec=frontcover accessed 14 December 2020.

living on a farm at Burrumbeet and that was a major business as by 11 February 1868 Donald had various employees including several Chinese and by February 1873 Donald needed at least fourteen or fifteen men.[883]

Community involvement

Ballarat and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society

Donald was on the Council of the Ballarat and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society by 1860 and stayed on that Council until 1899.[884] He was elected one of the Vice Presidents in December 1867[885] and was President in 1872.[886] Donald, unusually, only served one year as President - the short term was because he was appointed President of Ballaratshire on 11 November 1872 (see the next section): to simultaneously hold both positions would have been an enormous time demand. Donald was again a Vice President in 1883.

In March 1865 Donald was part of a delegation – as a member representing the 'Ballarat Agricultural Society[887]' – which welcomed the Governor of Victoria, Sir Charles Darling, to Ballarat. In 1872 he represented the society in Melbourne, helping appoint the Secretary to the Agricultural Department.[888] He was also one of three judges[889] who inspected farms in several areas of Victoria, including Ballarat and Kyneton, in December 1883. Again, he was the Ballarat Agricultural Society representative. There were prizes of £50, £30 and £20 on offer, these had been donated by Sir William Clarke, the largest landowner in Victoria.

Donald also regularly entered the Ballarat and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society shows, for example in 1869 he entered the Draught Mare section but was not placed in the awards, but he did win the sheepdogs group.[890]

Donald was appointed before 11 October 1883 to be a paid sheep shearing inspector for entrants to the Ballarat Agricultural Society Show.[891] He would visit 'the stations and farms upon receipt of written notice, and after satisfying himself that the sheep have been evenly, equally and fairly shorn, (would) … brand them and give the owner a certificate to that effect.'[892] At a 7 April 1884 meeting of the Society it was reported[893] that 'There was a large attendance of members, in anticipation of an

[883] Page 2, 'The Ballarat Star' 6 February 1873.
[884] Page 6, 'The Argus' 11 May 1871.
[885] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 9 December 1867.
[886] Page 7, 'The Age', 09 Nov 1872.
[887] Being various newspaper reports short version of the 'Ballarat and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society.'
[888] Page 6, 'The Argus', 9 November 1872.
[889] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 27 November 1883.
[890] Page 5, 'Weekly Times' 16 October 1869.
[891] Page 5, 'The Argus' 11 October 1883: BALLARAT. WEDNESDAY. The Ballarat Agricultural Society has appointed Mr Donald Gunn of Burrumbeet as inspector of sheep which have been shorn and intended for exhibition at the Society's sheep show in September, 1884. Mr Gunn visits the stations and farms upon receipt of written notice and after satisfying himself that the sheep have been evenly, equally, and fairly shorn, will brand them and give the owner a certificate to that effect. The inspector's fee is £3 3s, to be paid at the time of inspection. The Ercildoune sheep have all been certified, and next week the Caringham, Ellingrerrin, Barunah Plains and Berry Bank stations will be visited.
[892] Page 5, 'The Argus' 11 October 1883.
[893] Page 6, 'The Argus' 3 March 1884. And page 7, 'The Argus' 7 April 1884: THE BALLARAT SHOW SHEEP. BALLARAT, SATURDAY The dispute between the Ballarat Agricultural Society and Mr C. Ayrey, of Woronooke station respecting his sheep entered

unfavourable report from (Donald)' with the implication being that he was known for his direct way of speech and high standards. And 'with two exceptions, there was not a holding on which he did not find the sheep improperly shorn — in some instances as much as 50 per cent.' That meeting also included discussion of a problem caused by an earlier report from him.

Donald was again appointed an Inspector of the shearing for the Ballarat and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society[894] in July 1886 – he was paid £60 for six weeks work and £1 for every station visited. Donald being appointed to paid positions by the society from at least 1883 may reflect Donald's monetary problems from at least 1883. This issue is discussed on page 29.

The Society had a tradition of ploughing matches. The first was held on 10 July 1856. These matches became grander over the years – by 1883 they involved competitors from other Australian colonies. The 20 - 21 July 1883 match involved Donald as Vice-President. 'The Ballarat Star' review of the second day is of note –

> *THE INTERCOLONIAL CHAMPION PLOUGHING MATCH SECOND DAY—FRIDAY.*
> *...There was not much for visitors to see at Burrumbeet yesterday, but nevertheless there was at times a little excitement. An aboriginal known as "King Billy of Burrumbeet," the last of a once numerous race, paraded the ground, with boomerang in hand, during the day. The old fellow, who was slightly under the influence of liquor, gave several exhibitions of his skill in using the native weapon. At the end of each performance the blackfellow would go round and ask for money. Upon being refused on one occasion, King Billy cried out, "Why do you not give; you should give me money; you live in my country..."*

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for the next annual show was finally settled at the monthly meeting to-day. At the last meeting a resolution was carried that, as Mr Ayrey had withdrawn his refusal to allow his sheep to be inspected by the society's inspector, the original motion debarring him from competing, and returning his offer of a £50 donation, should be rescinded. There was a large attendance of members, in anticipation of an unfavourable report from the inspector when the minutes were read.
The President (Mr Philip Russell), said the minutes were scarcely in accordance with the spirit of the resolution. It was understood that the motion for rescinding the action taken was carried conditionally upon the inspector's report being favourable to the state of Mr Ayrey's sheep. If the minutes were now confirmed, as just read, Mr Ayrey was entirely exonerated no matter what the tenor of Mr Gunn's report might be. If the meeting adopted them without hearing the report he should refuse to take any further responsibility, and vacate the chair.
Mr G G MORTON thought the chairman should not attempt to coerce the other members by threatening to vacate the chair. Several members said the impression they were under was that the motion was carried contingent upon the inspector's report.
Mr ROWE said that if the minutes were adopted, Mr Ayrey would leave that meeting without the slightest stigma on his name.
Mr GUNN said the question was, were the minutes correct or incorrect? If they were correct then they must be confirmed.
After some further discussion a motion was carried confirming the minutes and the president … ruled that the inspector's report could not be read.
Mr MORTON remarked that whatever Mr Russell had done in this matter, they all gave him credit for acting in a disinterested manner, and wholly in the interests of the society. He had however, been carried away by over zeal and ... the matter should be allowed to drop.
At a subsequent stage a letter was read from Mr Robert Simson owner of the Langi Kal Kal station with reference to the refusal to allow his sheep to be inspected. It transpired that the cause was a slight misunderstanding between the manager and the inspector and no action was taken.
In reply to a question, Mr Gunn, the inspector, said that as the system was on its trial he had refrained from selecting any station for special report; but he could inform the committee that with two exceptions there was not a holding on which he did not find the sheep improperly shorn - in some instances as much as 50 per cent.

[894] Page 6, 'The Ballarat Star' 5 July 1886.

Ballaratshire Councillor and J.P.

Donald was interested in political movements of the day; there is record of this in his Buninyong days and in September 1864 he participated in a meeting of 'The Anti-Transportation Movement' at Learmonth; British convicts were continuing to be transported to Western Australia. Donald proposed a motion – ''That this meeting records a unanimous opinion that the introduction of transported convicts into any of the Australasian colonies is calculated to lower the tone of public morals, and to create and promote social evils of a most alarming character the whole of these colonies' … He stated that if Western Australia required convicts, Victoria could send them hers.'[895] Donald became very involved with local politics. He stood for election as Councillor for the South Riding of the Ballaratshire Council in early August 1865 but was defeated 89 votes to 67 votes. An extraordinary election for the South Riding was held later that month which Donald won. This meant he became a Councillor on 30 August 1865 and continued as one until 10 June, 1867. Donald was re-elected to the Shire of Ballarat Council for the South Riding on 15 August 1870 (he won 217 votes to his opponent's 152) and was President of the Shire from 11 November 1872 until 12 October 1874 whilst still representing the South Riding. As already mentioned, Donald was also President of the Ballarat and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society in 1872. Donald was sworn in as a Justice of the Peace on the 30 December 1873, perhaps in consequence of becoming President and he did work as a J.P. over the years.[896] Donald lost the August 1876 election and so ended his Ballaratshire political career.

The Shire meetings were held every second Monday at 1pm. The duties of a Councillor were varied. There were the normal meetings[897] in one of which Donald moved a motion[898] saying the Shire Council should pay the medical fees of those contracting scarlet fever and not able to pay for it themselves. This seems a modern idea arguing for state support for the poor. There were also formal dinners to attend.

The railways were crucial for opening up land to farmers. Donald (or more accurately, presumably, his wife and servants) provided lunch to the Minister of Railways and various Councillors at his home at Burrumbeet 7 January 1873 whilst President. Following that event, a public meeting was held in February - the issue was where to have a new railway station at Burrumbeet. Donald chaired that meeting and some viewed it as 'rowdy.'[899] Basically the core of the problem was that the chosen place for the new Station was – or was not - wrong. The suggestion in the newspaper report was that the meeting was stacked with workers from the Ercildoune estate who wanted it where it had been chosen to be but the rest of the locals wanted it on 'Gunn's Corner.'[900] Was the Ercildoune estate better connected to the Minister of Railways than other locals? One suspects so - it seems the railway station was not built on 'Gunn's Corner.' Donald again met with the Minister of Railways in December 1873, again he represented the Ballaratshire Council.

[895] Page 6, 'The Argus' 22 September 1864.
[896] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Courier' 22 January 1878.
[897] Page 6, 'The Argus' 19 April 1873.
[898] Page 6, 'The Argus' 8 December 1875.
[899] Page 2, 'The Ballarat Star' 6 February 1873.
[900] Page 2, 'The Ballarat Star' 6 February 1873.

Various other locally important events filled Donald's life in the early 1870s - the Governor of Victoria twice visited Ballarat and Donald escorted him in May and June 1873. Donald was appointed to the newly formed Ballarat Local Forest Board on 9 September 1873.[901] In 1874 he campaigned to improve Lake Burrumbeet.[902] In May 1874 he attended a meeting of the Ballarat Farmers' Club[903] which included a talk about how to possibly cure fluke infected sheep; Donald seconded the motion of thanks. Did he discuss this meeting at home and stimulate his eldest son's interest in curing diseases in animals? But Donald also undertook other activities as part of his Council duties – for example, he visited a poor woman who was meant to be living in a hovel without the necessities of life in 1876 and tried to help her.[904] Was Donald supportive of the poor due to his early life in Scotland?

His local fame was considerable and he was considered in February 1874, whilst still President of the Council, as a candidate for Parliament for the seat of Ripon and Hampden but he was not prepared to consider it unless 'requisitioned by voters from all parts of the electorate.' [905]

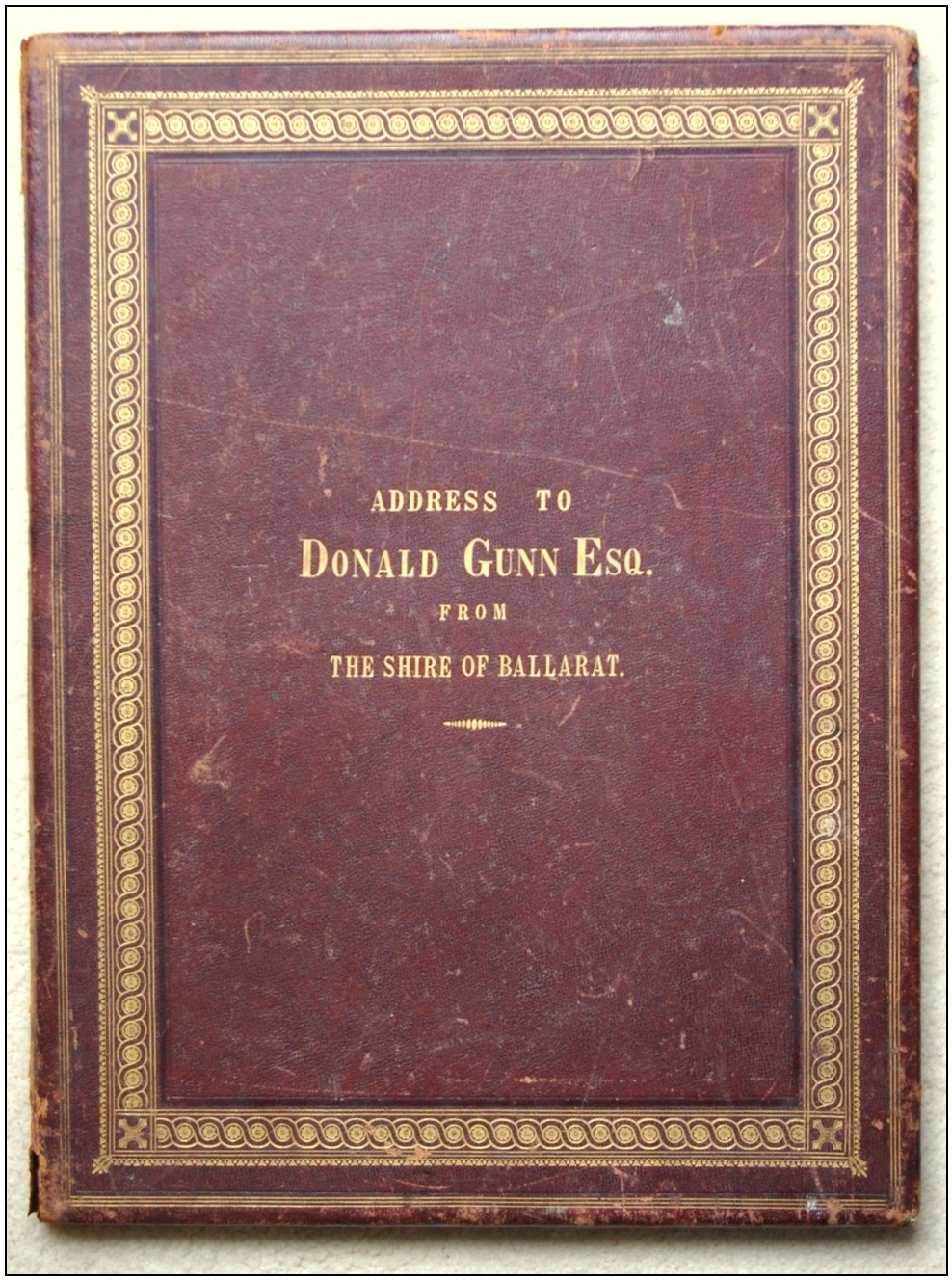
After losing the Council August 1876 election there was a banquet and presentation in his honour held at the Stag Hotel in Learmonth in December to commemorate his work for the Council. 'The Ballarat Courier'[906] wrote –

Mr. Donald Gunn JP, ex-councillor for the south riding of Ballaratshire, was, at the instance of that body, entertained at the Stag Hotel, Learmonth … on the occasion of presenting that gentleman with an address, in token of the esteem in the ten years he had the honor to hold a seat on that council. Between thirty and forty gentlemen … assembled to do honor to the occasion, and the gathering was, to say the least of it, a most gratifying expression of approval of his ability not only as councillor but also as president of the shire, which position he held two years in succession … The chairman (of the banquet) *then called upon Mr Richmond, as secretary of the shire, to read the address to Mr Gunn which was as follows: - 'To Donald Gunn, Esq. J.P., Burrumbeet. Sir, We, the president and councillors of the shire of Ballarat, desire to convey to you our warm appreciation of the very energetic and valuable services rendered by you as president of the shire and councillor for the south riding. We beg to acknowledge the impartial and gentlemanly manner in which you presided over all meetings of the council during your term of the presidentship, and your steady and consistent advocacy of all measures affecting the welfare of the shire, as a councillor for a period exceeding ten years. In conclusion we sincerely wish you, Mrs Gunn, and family long life and prosperity. Sealed and signed by the president and secretary.' The address, which was handsomely bound in morocco ... was then handed to Mr Gunn … Mr Gunn briefly responded, and said that he received this expression of their good feeling towards him in the warmest way possible …. If in any*

[901] Page 6, 'The Argus' 9 September 1873: BALLARAT FOREST BOARD. A Ballarat Local Forest Board, the 'Ballarat Courier' states, has been appointed by the Hon, the Minister of Lands. It will have the control and management of all state forests in the shires of Ballarat, Creswick, Bungaree, Buninyong, Ballan, and Meredith, and consist of the following members:- ... Donald Gunn, president, to represent the Council of the Shire of Ballarat; ... - provided that, if any person so appointed shall cease to hold office as specified, he shall thereupon also cease to be a member of the Ballarat Local Forest Board.
[902] Page 21, 'The Leader' 8 August 1874.
[903] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 18 May 1874.
[904] Page 3, 'The Argus' 14 June 1876.
[905] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 7 February 1874.
[906] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Courier' 13 December 1876.

way he could further the interests of Ballaratshire he would be most happy to do so. If the south riding did not think that he was fit to represent them, he was proud to see every one of his colleagues present to do him honor. ...

Donald was obviously popular and his work for the community was appreciated even though the South Riding, finally, did not return him.



The presented Address. It is approximately 20½ inches long by 15½ inches wide.

To

Donald Gunn Esq J.P.

BURRUMBEET.

Sir

We the President and Councillors of the Shire of Ballarat desire to convey to you our warm appreciation of the very energetic and valuable services rendered by you as a President of the Shire and Councillor for the South Riding.

We beg to acknowledge the impartial and gentlemanly manner in which you presided over all meetings of the Council during your term of Presidentship, and your steady and consistent advocacy of all measures affecting the welfare of the Shire, as a Councillor for a period extending over ten years.

In conclusion we sincerely wish you, Mrs Gunn and Family long life and prosperity.

As witness the Common Seal of the Corporation of the Shire of Ballarat affixed hereto this 11th Decr. A.D. 1876. in the presence of;

James McIntosh President.

James Robinson Secretary.

F.W. Niven Ballarat

The presented Address.

Personal, continued

The rural world continued. It is recorded that for the Gunns in the 'late summer of 1876-1877, while living at Burrumbeet, there was a heavy storm during the night and in the morning the tubs, buckets, plough furrows, and every depression that held water were full of a small fish similar to whitebait, and from 2 1/2 in. to 3 in. in length … they must have numbered hundreds of thousands.'[907]

Donald Gunn was still busy - he won a silver medal at the Paris Exhibition[908] of May to November 1878 in Class 69 (Cereals, Farinaceous Products and Products derived from them) with his exhibit of one bushel of Frampton wheat. The Exhibition was on a sixty-six acre site with half the space given to French exhibits and the other half to the rest of the world; the award was made by an International Jury.

Over the years much detail exists for all sorts of auctions of Donald's livestock, farming implements, crops and land. The newspapers of the day record various auction dates for him including 16 April 1868, 2 April 1869, 3 February 1870, 25 March 1870, 27 Nov 1873 and 20 Feb 1879. These events seem odd for a committed farmer.

As well, the lease on the Burrumbeet farm was to run out on 31 March 1882, the farm at this time was in two parts – one of 815 acres, the other of 316 acres on which was the accommodation. This approaching end of lease meant by March 1881 Donald had given up cropping and was just grazing animals. Consequently, he sold in that month assorted items no longer required including forks, rakes, weighing machines, ploughs and much, much more. There was also a major auction on 1 December 1881 of his growing crop. But Donald changed his mind or found some more money – in March 1886 he was still a farmer at Burrumbeet[909] but had 'inflammation of the lungs' and so could not attend the Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society meeting of 7 March. Donald stayed on his farm till sometime around mid-1886.

This continual auctioning of items and leaving / not leaving the farm has only one logical reason – Donald was a speculator (or possibly gambler) who regularly lost money. His grandson John William Gunn,[910] who was the eldest son of William Watkins Gunn (the second son of Donald Gunn), recorded that Donald was a 'whisky drinker … (who) Lost his money.' Failed speculation explains why a lifelong farmer kept selling his items and stock. And why else would Donald, who certainly ran a major farm for many years, end his days in Ballarat moving from rented accommodation to rented accommodation? See Chapter 2.3. As already discussed, Donald also took paid work with the Ballarat and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society from at least 1883 onwards; it suggests a need for cash. It is worth noting that his friend William Turner,[911] the Melbourne banker and father of his eldest son's

[907] Page 4, 'The Argus', 19 November 1920.
[908] Page 5, 'The Ballarat Star' 25 August 1883.
[909] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 8 March 1886.
[910] John William Gunn — his notes, held in 1996 by Dorothy Margaret Jenkin (nee Milner): 'Donald - whisky drinker and bought station near Ararat beyond Ercildoune. Lost his money…'.
[911] See page 20 for more information on William Turner. Page 237 Michael Cannon *Land Boom and Bust* – 'William Turner … made a secret composition (bankruptcy arrangement) with his creditors in September 1892. His debts totalled more than £24,000, on which he was able to pay 3d in the £1 … Cause of insolvency: speculation in land and shares.'

wife, was a major speculator who also lost his wealth. The main Victorian speculation was on land which would suit a farmer's hopes.

In between his financial issues, farming, family and meetings Donald enjoyed sporting activities. In November 1864 he helped with the Lake Learmonth regatta as a Steward. He participated in pigeon shooting as one 'one of the leading sportsmen' of the area[912] in April 1871. He also coursed dogs with some success, in 1879 and 1882 and presumably at other times. He was also was involved with 'The Ballarat Hounds' – or fox hunting – to some degree in 1889 when he was part of those who drove on the roads following the pack.[913] Presumably he may have participated at an earlier time.

Donald also remained part of the wider community. Many examples of his involvement exist including him chairing the farewell to Mr Duncan Robertson in September 1873[914] (which event had over seventy 'gentlemen' present), being elected as the Learmonth Branch delegate to go to the Melbourne Conference of the Victorian Farmers Union in 1879[915] and addressing a meeting in June 1881 about the operation of the new Stamp Act. He also chaired the annual Prize Giving at the local school in February 1885.

But life had its sad times – the previously mentioned Donald Campbell spent many years living with Donald and Jane. He died at their home in March 1885 and his remains were interred at the Gunn plot with Donald, Jane, Hugh and Mary-Jane, see page 37.

Donald was Past Master of the Ballarat branch of the Lodge Order of St Andrew Friendly Society by no later than 1886.[916] The title of the Society shows its Scottish interest. Its interests included helping its members in times of trouble. In 1892 the Lodge presented

Br Donald Gunn with a testimonial in recognition of his long and valued services as librarian to the lodge. The library has just been replenished, and now contains a first-class assortment of standard works and the most popular productions of modern authors. Br John Ross, W. M. made the presentation, which consisted of a splendid gold embossed item manufactured by Br A. T. Thompson, of Main street, and referred to Br Gunn's lengthy services to the lodge. Br Gunn suitably replied, and referred to the change which had been made in the status of the society, whereby the order is now prepared to accept candidates of any nationality provided they are of good character, and that with the splendid library and additional attraction offered the membership list would show a considerable increase by the end of the year.[917]

But by early 1886 Donald – and his family's time - at the farm was over. That also meant leaving the local Presbyterian community. 'The Ballarat Star' of Tuesday 23 March 1886 recorded that

[912] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 25 April 1871.
[913] Page 25, 'The Australasian' 3 August 1889.
[914] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 8 September 1873.
[915] Page 3, 'The Argus' 8 October 1879.
[916] Page 11, 'The Ballarat Star' 15 January 1887 - 'It was decided to have Past Master Br Donald Gunn's name placed on the merit board and to present him with a handsome certificate for the efficient manner in which he had conducted business during his term of office.'
[917] Page 10, 'The Ballarat Star' 18 February 1892.

An interesting meeting of the congregation assembled, in the Presbyterian Church, Burrumbeet, on Friday evening last, for the purpose of saying farewell to the family of Mr Donald Gunn, J.P. who is leaving Burrumbeet. The Rev. Mr Thomson occupied the chair, and in a few well-chosen words expressed on behalf of the congregation, the esteem in which the family was held, and the sorrow felt that they were leaving the district, at the same time expressing most earnest wishes for their future welfare. He then presented Mrs Gunn with a very handsome workbox and writing desk combined, and Miss Gunn (Mary Jane Gunn) *and Miss Barbara Gunn with a pair of handsome bracelets. The young ladies have acted as organists to the church, while the many services Mrs Gunn has rendered the church during her 22 years residence are too numerous to particularise. Mr Gunn, on behalf of his wife and daughters, suitably responded … I understand that it is the intention of Mr Gunn's friends to give that gentleman a farewell banquet on the 15th prox., and from the wide circle of friends which Mr Gunn has gained the affair is certain to be not only well attended but a most enjoyable and gratifying leave-taking on the part of all.*

Of interest are the significant roles played in the Burumbeet Presbyterian Church (which was actually in Windermere) by Donald's wife Jane and their two daughters. Jane's brother William Watkins Surman was a Burrumbeet Presbyterian Church stalwart - he not merely helped physically build this church but also conducted services there. Donald did not receive a gift; was Donald too busy elsewhere to fully involve himself with church activities?

The previously mentioned farewell banquet to Donald was later reported in 'The Ballarat Star' of Saturday 17 April 1886 –

BANQUET TO MR DONALD GUNN J.P.
A complimentary banquet was tendered to Mr Donald Gunn, J.P. of Burrumbeet, at the Two Bridges hotel, on Thursday, evening, on the occasion of that gentleman's leaving the farm he has occupied for over 20 years. – When it became known that Mr Gunn was about to sever his connection with the distinct, a meeting of his friends was held to consider the best means of tendering a public farewell to a prominent resident of the shire and magistrate of the district, and it was resolved that Mr Gunn be invited, to a banquet, and a committee was formed to bring the affair to a successful issue, Cr John Innes, of Windermere being appointed chairman; and Cr John King, of Two Bridges, secretary. The banquet on Thursday night showed how successful these two gentlemen had been in their efforts, about 60 gentlemen sitting down to a recherche spread after Host Comber's best style. Mr G. G. Morton, J.P. of Labona, occupied the chair, and, Messrs Baird and King the vice-chairs, having round them gentlemen connected with every interest in the neighborhood, most of the surrounding districts being also well represented. After ample justice had been done to the good things provided, toasting and songs became the order of the night. The following is the programme observed:— The toast of "The Queen," by the chairman. Apologies were here tendered for President Rennie, Major Greenfield, and Mr Quinliyan. "The Governor," by the chairman; "Parliament," by Cr J. Baird, responded to by Mr Uren, M.L.A.; "Our Guest," by the chairman; song, by Mr Cox. Mr Gunn then responded in an appropriate and feeling manner, referring to the many pleasant relationships existing between himself, the members of his family, and his neighbors. "The Agricultural and Pastoral Interests," by Mr J. W-H. Lugg." Responded to by Messrs Bath and Baird. "The Commercial Interest," by Mr H Curwen-

Walker. Response by Mr R. Tunbridge. Recitation, Mr M'Cubbin. "The City of Ballarat," by Mr B. Hepburn. Response by Mayor Salter. "The Mining Interest," by Mr Bath. Song, Mr M'Donald. Response by Mr.M'Cubbin. "The Shire of Ballarat," by Mr Lester. Response by Cr J. Dalgleish and Cr. John lnnes. Recitation, Mr Hunter. "The Ladies," by Cr John Spiers, Song Mr M'Donald, Response by Mr R. Dalgleish and Mr H. Bregenzer. "The Press," by Cr J. Dalgleish. Responded to by Mr Lugg on behalf of the Ballarat papers. "The Host and Hostess," by Mr. Moncrieff. Responded to by Mr Comber. Toast, "Chairman and Vice-Chairman," by Mr Gunn, and responded to. During the evening, advantage was taken of the presence of Mr H. Curwen Walker (who is also leaving the district), to toast his health and that of his family. From the tenor of the remarks of the various speakers, it is evident that Burrumbeet in particular and the Ballaratshire generally, has lost a much appreciated resident. The chairman and other gentlemen pointing to the many services Mr Gunn had rendered the district in his various capacities of member of the road board, councillor and president of the shire, justice of the peace, vice-president of the agricultural society, and other temporary public positions, as evidence of the kind of gentleman they were losing from their midst, one and all joining in wishing him and his family "God-speed." The National Anthem and "Auld lang syne" brought a pleasant and acceptable leave-taking to a successful close

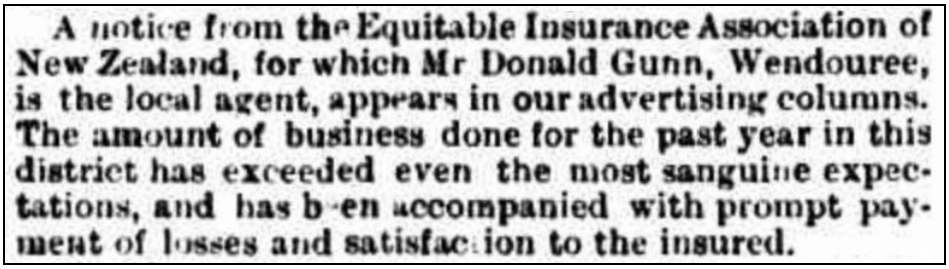
One has to assume that the reason for leaving the farm was that Donald's financial luck finally ran out around mid to late 1886. He was only 54 years old and had worked hard all his life but certainly had employees on the farm who could do the hard work. He also had enough sons to run a farm – if there was a farm. But the oldest sons had left home - JA was appointed Manager at South Yalgogrin Station, Ardlethan, New South Wales in 1886. See page 20 for more on his extraordinary life. His second son, William Watkins, was working in Gippsland by 1884. Donald's third son but fourth child - also called Donald - had been born in 1865. It is not clear what this Donald was doing in 1886 but soon after he worked for William Watkins in Gippsland. In other words, the elder sons had dispersed from the greater Ballarat region; they seemed to have had no expectation of taking over a working farm. Again, this provides support for the idea that Donald lost money.

2.3. BALLARAT

Wendouree

The Gunns moved to Wendouree, on the western fringe of Ballarat, by January 1887[918] but possibly earlier. Donald's farewell banquet was, as already discussed, in April 1886 – it makes sense that they would have moved soon after it.

Money was still needed. At Wendouree Donald worked as an insurance agent which he continued to be for the rest of his life. He worked for a variety of companies, probably many simultaneously, including the Equitable Insurance Association of New Zealand, The Federal Mutual Livestock Insurance Association of Australia Ltd., The South Australian Insurance Company Limited, The Royal Insurance Company and the Lion Fire Insurance Company. There is no record of him being such an agent before leaving Burrumbeet.


A notice from the Equitable Insurance Association of New Zealand, for which Mr Donald Gunn, Wendouree, is the local agent, appears in our advertising columns. The amount of business done for the past year in this district has exceeded even the most sanguine expectations, and has been accompanied with prompt payment of losses and satisfaction to the insured.

Page 2, 'The Ballarat Star' 3 December 1887.

'Mr Donald Gunn, Wendouree' was also the local agent for the Equitable Insurance Association of New Zealand as shown by the above newspaper extract which suggests he has done his job well.
Donald continued with some community work – he was the returning officer for the 'Board of Advice for School District 83'[919] (being the Burrumbeet School) in October 1887. He had not quite given up his past commitment to Burrumbeet.

Donald's home address in Wendouree is not known but the local newspapers have many advertisements by him[920] until 30 May 1888. It is presumed the Gunns left Wendouree sometime between June and December 1888.

[918] Page 13, 'The Australasian' 29 January 1887.
[919] Page 3, 'The Ballarat Star' 19 October 1887.
[920] For example, page 3 'The Ballarat Star' 27 February 1888 and page 1 'The Ballarat Star' 17 May 1888.

109 Doveton Street North, Ballarat

By 15 January 1889[921] the Gunns had moved to 109 Doveton Street North, Ballarat; Doveton Street is now the Midland Highway with huge amounts of redevelopment. Basically, nothing is left of the area from the Victorian times bar the occasional hotel and odd other building which was missed in the redevelopment of the 1960s and 1970s.

Donald continued his involvement with the local community – he chaired a political meeting at Cummins Hotel in Doveton Street on 20 March 1889.[922] And, as already discussed, he was part of the Ballarat branch of the Lodge Order of St Andrew. He also continued to commit to meetings with the Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society, finally though that Society became too much. In September 1899 –

The resignation of Mr D. Gunn from the council of the Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society was received at Saturday's meeting of that body. Mr Gunn wrote, stating that after 39 years' service as a member of the council, he was obliged to tender his resignation owing to his hearing not being good, and consequently he was not able to follow the discussions at the council meetings. He expressed his acknowledgment of the kind and courteous manner in which he had always been treated by the members, and stated that he would always do all he could to further the interests of the society.[923]

Donald's work continued – notices by him for various insurances companies such as the Royal Insurance Company[924] occur in the papers. But a further string to his bow is with real estate – Donald is selling an allotment[925] in Sturt Street Ballarat with 'with six roomed house and four-room house, stabling and outhouses. These dwellings are rented to respectable tenants, and yielding a good income.'

Home life also continued - on 5 March 1890 his second grand-daughter Jessie Jean Gunn was born at Doveton Street. She was the second daughter of JA and Jessie. Their first daughter Gladys Emily Gunn had been born in 1887 at Jessie's father's and stepmother's home of Nithsdale in Brighton, Melbourne - it was normal for daughters to go home to parents to give birth. Why, after the first child, did Jessie go to her in-laws to give birth to her last three children? It is noteworthy that the first two children of William Watkins Gunn were also later born in the homes of the Ballarat Gunns. To have two daughters-in-law breaking societal convention suggests Donald and Jane were very welcoming.

It is not known when Donald and his family left Doveton Street North but it was before late August 1891.[926]

[921] Page 2 'The Ballarat Star' 15 January 1889.
[922] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 21 March 1889.
[923] Page 5, 'The Ballarat Star' 4 September 1899.
[924] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 16 February 1891.
[925] Page 6, 'The Ballarat Star' 16 April 1891.
[926] Page 3, 'The Ballarat Star' 26 August 1891.

32 Brougham Street, Ballarat

By August 1891[927] the Gunns had moved to the corner of Armstrong and Brougham Street – to be more accurate they moved to 32 Brougham Street. Brougham Street intersects Doveton Street North. Today the street has been renumbered and is a place of small, Victorian weatherboard houses. This again supports the idea that Donald lost money as this area was not the home of a retired, wealthy farmer. And this lack of money was compounded by a major economic depression hitting Victoria from the late 1880s.

Did any money ever come from his children? There are no records to say one way or the other but a hint is given in the 1910 will of JA where £150 a year for life was left to his mother Jane even though she was dead by that time. I suspect the £150 a year was the continuation of a yearly allowance in place when the will was drawn up but whether the amount had been issued whilst Donald was alive is not known. Certainly, one understands why JA could have issued an allowance – he was the wealthiest of the children by far and the most senior. Equally one understands why, if the money was issued whilst Donald was alive, it was issued to Jane as Donald had lost enough money and his ego may have made it awkward to accept money.

Donald continued his work as an insurance agent and regularly advertised in the newspapers. For example, 'The Ballarat Star' of 27 July 1892 carried an advertisement saying 'FOR SALE, a FARM of 160 acres near Ballarat, on easy terms; also the goodwill of several good hotels. Apply Donald Gunn. Commission Agent. 32 Brougham Street. Ballarat North.' So, he was not merely an insurance agent but continued as a real estate agent.

Donald and Jane attended the Mayoral Ball[928] in July 1892 and also the return ball[929] given by the Citizens of Ballarat to the Mayor and his Wife. I suspect this was not the first time the Gunns attended such events: Donald was a citizen of note in Ballaratshire even though he had come down in circumstances. His interest in politics had also not waned - in October 1900 Donald chaired a meeting of candidates for the forthcoming Victorian General Election.[930]

Donald was still in Brougham Street on 13 May 1892 as Alexander Donald Gunn, the third child of JA and Jessie, was born there.

It is not clear when the Gunns left 32 Brougham Street. Donald still used the address on 28 July 1892[931] but the Gunns were certainly in their next home by February 1895.

[927] Page 3, 'The Ballarat Star' 27 August 1891.
[928] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 16 July 1892.
[929] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 11 August 1892.
[930] Page 5, 'The Ballarat Star' 6 April 1892.
[931] Page 3, 'The Ballarat Star' 28 July 1892.

185 Lydiard Street, Ballarat

The Gunn family moved to 185 Lydiard Street before 28 February 1895 as another grandson, John William Gunn, was born there on that day. John William was the eldest son of William Watkins Gunn. The second child of William Watkins - Jean Margaret Gunn – was also born at Lydiard Street on 6 April 1896. On 23 May 1895 the fourth child of JA and Jessie - Angus William Gunn – was also born at Lydiard Street. To restate, tradition has daughters going to their parents' home to give birth and not to their in-laws, as such these births are a mark in Donald's and Jane's favour. Another significant family event occurred at Lydiard Street – Donald and Jane's daughter Barbara married Isaac Padgett on 29 March 1899. Barbara was teaching at Mt Cole before her marriage.[932] It is probable that of Donald and Jane's children only Arthur Gilbert[933] and Catherine were at home after that marriage.

Donald continued with earning a living selling real estate[934] and being an insurance agent.[935] But drought occurred in the mid-1890s and lasted for a few years so one suspects fewer people would have been buying insurance.[936]

Donald was very ill by 6 February 1901[937] and died on 14 February 1901. He died from broncho-pneumonia and heart disease.[938] The Ballarat Star's comment was

A very old and highly respected resident of Ballarat, in the person of Mr Donald Gunn, insurance agent, died at his home on Soldiers' Hill yesterday. Deceased, who was 68 years of age, had resided in Ballarat for a great number of years, and was probably one of the best known men in the district, where he had made hosts of friends by his genial disposition, and the news of his death will be heard of with regret. He leaves a widow and grown-up family to mourn their loss.[939]

The private funeral was on Saturday 16 February and Donald was interred in the Ballarat Old Cemetery Area in the Gunn plot, namely DN Sec.14 Lot 5, Ballarat, Vic.[940] This plot was bought by JA.[941]

Donald's wife Jane later lived with her youngest daughter Catherine at Clarendon Street according to the 1903 and 1905 electoral rolls. Clarendon Street intersects Lydiard Street. In 1904 their address was 16 Doveton Street according to the Victorian Post Office Directory. Jane died on 14 February 1908 at

[932] Page 416, D. Gunn, A. Gunn, *Scotland and Beyond; the Families of Donald Gunn (Tormsdale) and John Gunn (Dalnaha, Strathmore and Braehour)*
[933] Arthur married at the Scots Church in Lydiard Street on 3 December 1901when aged 23 years old so suggesting he was at home during Donald's lifetime
[934] For example, page 5, 'The Ballarat Star' 4 September 1895.
[935] Certificate of Death: Vic 1901 24552: 14 February 1901 at Lydiard Street, City of Ballarat, Donald Gunn, 68, insurance agent of broncho pneumonia, cardiac disease and asthma, duration about 3 months…
[936] See Chapter 9, Geoffrey Blainey, *Our Side of the Country: the Story of Victoria.*
[937] Page 4, 'The Ballarat Star' 6 February 1901.
[938] Register of BDMs - Victoria, 1901 253; page 6, 'The Ballarat Courier', Friday 15 Feb 1901, on the 14th February, at 185 Lydiard Street, Donald Gunn, aged 68 years.
[939] Page 5, 'The Ballarat Star' 15 February 1901.
[940] Ballarat Old Cemetery records; Page 4, The Ballarat Courier, 15 February 1901 'the friends of the late Donald Gunn are respectfully informed that his remains will be interred in the old Ballarat Cemetery. The funeral cortege will leave his late residence, 185 Lydiard Street North, on Saturday 16th February at 2 o'clock. Funeral private; Certificate of Death: Vic 1901 24552.'
[941] Ballarat Old Cemetery records.

616 Lydiard Street[942] – again another move which suggests rental properties. Jane is buried in the same grave as her husband.

Donald was a major character in the Buninyong and Ballarat areas – he was involved in many Committees and tried to do his best for society. Society also liked him – to restate 'The Ballarat Star' - (Donald) *was probably one of the best known men in the district, where he had made hosts of friends by his genial disposition, and the news of his death will be heard of with regret.*[943]

Donald was one of those friendly men who have real, but local, impact and who was loved by many. Few of us can hope for more.

Donald Gunn's grave at the Old Ballarat Cemetery. It reads –

In Loving Memory
of
Donald Gunn
born at Brawlbin Reay Caithness Scotland
28 March 1832, died 14th Feby 1901
Also his sixth son Hugh
Died 24th June 1879, aged 3 years
His beloved wife
Jane Gunn
born at Hampton Poyle Oxford England
18 Jany 1836, died 14 Feby 1908
And their affectionate friend
Donald Campbell

And on a separate plaque below the headstone - Mary Jane Gunn Died 5th May 1934

[942] Register of BDMs - Victoria, 1908 219.
[943] Page 5, 'The Ballarat Star' 15 February 1901.

The Gunn and Surman plots at the Ballarat Old Cemetery. The left grave commemorates John Watkins Surman (1831 - 1906) and his wife Jessie (Janet Gunn) (1834-1913), the middle grave is for John Watkins Surman's parents Daniel Surman (1805-1869) and Mary Ann Surman (1811-1894) and their grandson Watkins Surman (1871 –1875). The right grave is for Donald Gunn (1832-1901), his wife Jane Gunn (1836-1908), his sixth son Hugh (1875-1879), his daughter Mary Jane Gunn (1864 -1934) and for their relative Donald Campbell (1840-1885).

Descendants of Donald Gunn and Jane Surman

Donald GUNN 28 Mar 1832 Brawlbin, Reay Parish, Caithness, d. 14 Feb 1901 Ballarat, Vic
+**Jane SURMAN** b. 18 Jan 1836 Hampton Poyle, Oxfordshire, m. 1859 Buninyong, Vic, d. 14 Feb 1908 Ballarat, Vic

- **John Alexander GUNN (Hon.)** b. 11 Feb 1860 Buninyong, Vic, d. 21 Sep 1910 Sydney, NSW
  +**Jessie Marie TURNER** b. 1862 Beechworth, Vic, m. 1886 North Brighton, Vic, d. 1925 Randwick, NSW[944]
  - **Gladys Emily GUNN** b. 1887 North Brighton, Vic, d. 1968 Melbourne, Vic
  - **Jessie Jean GUNN** b. 1890 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1891 NSW
  - **Alexander Donald GUNN** b. 1892 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1956 Melbourne, Vic
  - **Angus William GUNN** b. 1895 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1926 Perth, WA
- **William Watkins GUNN** b. 26 Dec 1861 Nr Ballarat, Vic, d. 24 Jun 1935 Crossover, Vic
  +**Margaret Jane BALHARRIE** b. 1860 Perth, Tayside, m. 1891 Bloomfield, Vic, d. 1946 Frankston, Vic
  - **John William GUNN** b. 1895 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1981 Frankston, Vic
  - **Jean Margaret GUNN** b. 1896 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1975 Glenhuntly, Vic
  - **Violet Helen GUNN** b. 1898 Warragul, Vic, d. 1968 Frankston, Vic
  - **Edith Mary GUNN** b. 1899 Warragul, Vic, d. 1901 Sandringham, Vic
  - **Marjorie May GUNN** b. 1904 Warragul, Vic, d. 1970 Launching Place, Vic
  - **Marcus Allan GUNN** b. 1906 Crossover, Vic, d. 1981 Melbourne, Vic
- **Mary Jane GUNN** b. 18 Jan 1864 Cardigan Nr Ballarat, Vic, d. 5 May 1934 Werribee, Vic
- **Donald GUNN** b. 20 Nov 1865 Burrumbeet, Vic, d. 29 Dec 1933 Crossover, Vic
  +**Amy Agnes WAREHAM** b. Oct 1862 Cheshire, m. 1922 Middle Park, Vic, d. 1939 South Melbourne Vic
- **Marcus Daniel GUNN** b. 11 May 1868 Buninyong, Vic, d. 1 Dec 1952 South Yarra, Vic
  +**Mary Jane CHENHALL**[945] b. 1873 Chiltern, Vic, m. 1903 Corowa, NSW, d. 1941 Melbourne, Vic
  - **Keith Lindsay GUNN** b. 1904 Corowa, NSW, d. 1967 Melbourne, Vic
  - **Norma Mary GUNN** b. 1907 Corowa, NSW, d. 1971 Melbourne, Vic
- **Barbara GUNN** b. 20 Jun 1870 Burrumbeet, Vic, d. 17 Jul 1941 Werribee, Vic
  +**Isaac PADGETT** b. 1867 Mount Cole, Vic, m. 1899 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1937 Werribee, Vic
  - **Barbara Gunn PADGETT** b. 1901 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1960
  - **Norman Gunn PADGETT** b. 1903 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1952 Princhester, Qld
  - **Jean Gunn PADGETT** b. 1913 Vic, d. 2002
- **Norman GUNN** b. 11 May 1872 Burrumbeet, Vic, d. 1944 Williamstown, Vic
- **Hugh GUNN** b. 28 Oct 1875 Burrumbeet, Vic, d. 24 Jun 1879 Burrumbeet, Vic
- **Arthur Gilbert GUNN** b. 19 May 1878 Burrumbeet, Vic, d. 18 Jun 1933 Ivanhoe, Vic
  +**Louisa Maud Miriam RETALLICK** b. 1875 Naseby, Otago, m. 1901 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1959 Elsternwick, Vic
  - **Malcolm Donald GUNN** b. 1903 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1961 Heidelberg, Vic
  - **Kenneth Douglas GUNN** b. 1905 Kalgoorlie, WA, d. 1951 Longreach, Qld
  - **Angus Norman GUNN** b. 1912 Kalgoorlie, WA, d. 1994 Caringbah, NSW
  - **Colin GUNN** b. 1915 Ballarat, Vic, d. 1916 Ballarat, Vic
- **Catherine Alexandrina GUNN** b. 13 Sep 1880 Burrumbeet, Vic, d. 13 Aug 1960 Ormond, Vic

[944] http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/16209653?searchTerm=Gunn for her funeral notice.
[945] Her brother was W.T. Chenhall M.D., M.B. B.S. F.R.C.S. who was a notable Sydney surgeon until his death in 1923. See http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/16112528?searchTerm=Gunn

The Honourable John Alexander Gunn of N.S.W., Australia 1860 - 1910

John Alexander Gunn[946] was born at Buninyong, near Ballarat in the state of Victoria, Australia on 11 February 1860. His father was Donald (1832-1901), the previous biography, who had emigrated to Australia (probably in December 1854) and who had then settled near Ballaarat which was then in the throes of a gold rush. Donald was a Councillor of the Shire of Ballaarat for two periods early in J.A.'s life – 30 August 1865 until 10 June 1867 and 15 August 1870 until 12 October 1874. For the period 11 November 1872 until 12 October 1874 he was President of the Shire. Donald was also Foundation Secretary of the first Highland Society in Victoria – namely The Buninyong Highland Society which was established in 1854. (The first Melbourne society was established in 1861 and the Victorian society was established in 1864.) Donald's wife was Jane Surman of Oxford who was born on 18 January 1836. Donald's mother was Barbara (1810-1844) who was the second child of Donald the Sennachie (1770-1861).

Little is known of the early years of J.A.'s life bar that his parents' home "Burrumbeet" was becoming more crowded—by the time he left it in 1878 to be a jackaroo at South Yalgogrin station near Ardlethan, New South Wales; he had six brothers and two sisters. One more sister, Catherine, was born in 1880 which was two years after J.A. had left home to drive cattle to Yalgogrin station.

In 1886 J.A. was promoted to the position of manager of the station, before this he had been the overseer. The station was then owned by the major Australian pastoral firm of Goldsborough, Mort and Company. Also, in this year, on 8 June[947] he married Jessie Maria Turner at North Brighton in Melbourne. Jessie was born at Beechworth in Victoria which was then a small gold-mining, rural service town near the Victorian Alps. Her father, William, was born at Kirkconnell, Scotland and her mother Maria Reinhardt was born at Hessen Cassell in Germany. They were always much in love and Jessie had a major role in their marriage—she kept all of J.A.'s laboratory records and fought on his behalf for many years to try and gain recognition for J.A.'s scientific and public works after his comparatively early death.

Sometime between 1878 and 1888 it is believed that J.A. also wrote a novel called *The Conargo Blacks*. The Conargo region is near Wagga Wagga but otherwise nothing is known about the novel. His descendants do not have a copy nor does any Australian library. Did it exist?

With the acceptance of the managerial position J.A.'s scientific instincts came to prominence. In 1888 J.A. rode in a Yalgogrin paddock with Marcus Daniel, one of his younger brothers. They saw sheep dead in what was a fine season. Initially they thought it was due to poison but it was due to anthrax. This was not unlikely as in 1885-1886 the area immediately around Yalgogrin, which is the Merool district of the Northern Riverina, was devastated by the disease. One could lose half of one's sheep a year and all sheep regions of Australia were being attacked. This was despite Pasteur discovering a vaccine in France in 1881.

[946] First published in *The Ballarat Historian* vol.1, No.10 September 1983, with minor alterations 2009 / 2010 and 2024.
[947] *The Argus* 12 June 1886, page 1. They were married by the Rev Hay, at Nithsdale.

Pasteur's vaccine, though, was inappropriate for Australian conditions—he demanded £38,000 for its use and it needed to be kept cool and injected twice, fourteen days apart. Australia had a small population so could not afford that amount of money. The summers were hot so the vaccine was not reliable and it was very difficult and quite expensive to round up stock twice for injections.

By the 1890s anthrax was rampant throughout the Australian colonies and only rarely would natural increases make up for losses caused by the disease. As a consequence the quality of most flocks was declining. Anthrax is a particularly nasty disease in that the better the season the worse is the anthrax. J.A. had many reasons to experiment. In 1892 Yalgogrin consisted of 129,000 acres and ran 26,600 sheep, 34 horse and 41 cattle - Goldsborough, Mort and Co. also owned many other properties.

Leslie W. Devlin, who lived at Junee, had tested Pasteur's vaccine in earlier years and he and J.A. were to become close friends. At Yalgogrin J.A. established a laboratory in which he attempted to conquer anthrax [948]- it included a huge boiling down vat and a great brick chimney. Initially he used Devlin's notes which included some from Pasteur. (There is an apocryphal family story that J.A. locked himself in a room for four months and allowed no-one in and did not exit whilst he learnt adequate French to read Pasteur's notes; this I do not believe as his wife was fluent in French and helped her husband with the experiments.[949]) J.A. boiled down old sheep until he gained a clear solution then, using a converted chicken brooder which is now held at the Glenfield Veterinary Research Station, he introduced the anthrax culture. By the 1893-1894 summer J.A. had created his own vaccine but it was still double dose like Pasteur's - it was used, though, to inoculate over half a million sheep in that season. In 1897 J.A. succeeded where Pasteur had not in that he did develop a single dose serum. This, basically, was to save the Australian livestock industry.

The serum did not keep as well as J.A. desired. Initially he tried to get Devlin to help him increase the longevity of the serum but he was not successful. John McGarvie Smith was then approached and within days the keeping quality of the serum was markedly improved. McGarvie Smith had previously worked on snake venin and there is a story that he used to get snake collectors to release all their snakes into one room and they would then have to accept McGarvie Smith's price or attempt to recapture all their stock.[950]

McGarvie Smith expected and gained a partnership with J.A. for the production of the serum even though he had been involved with the research for a matter of days whereas J.A. had worked on it for years. J.A. was not happy about this - he talked it over with family and friends for some days but he had no alternative as McGarvie Smith knew the formula.[951] The partnership was to greatly prosper financially but in human terms it was a disaster that got worse. Under the terms of the partnership each was to maintain a laboratory - McGarvie Smith was to vaccinate north of Sydney and J.A. was to vaccinate south of Sydney and in Victoria. The partnership was entered into in April 1895.

[948]J. A. Gunn applied for permission to keep microbes and inoculate animals in December 1893 and nothing equivalent can be found for McGarvie Smith. *The Sydney Morning Herald* 8 December 1893, page 7.
[949]http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15646852?searchTerm=Gunn
[950]Quoted in R.Webster, *Bygoo and Beyond*, p.88.
[951]Ibidem, p.87.

J.A. was to write of the immediate seasons that followed that

... last season we inoculated over a million sheep with one inoculation, and though this was the first season of its use ... less than 10 per cent had to receive the second inoculation to render them absolutely immune; and this season, as we are more and more perfecting the material, out of another million not 2 per cent required a second vaccination... (The) President of the New South Wales Board of Health stated that vaccine under the most favourable circumstances killed 5 per cent of the sheep treated; he undoubtedly referred to the published results of Pasteur's process as under no circumstances whatever will McGarvie Smith and Gunn's vaccine kill a sheep... (and we) have offered to give £1000 to the charities of Sydney if he can produce proof of any deaths having been caused by it out of the 3,750,000 sheep treated by us.[952]

The challenge was never taken up: Pasteur's vaccine was now irrelevant as a cheap and foolproof method was now available.

J.A. continued to work for Goldsborough, Mort and Co. as well as working on the vaccine. In 1895 he was made a superintendent for all stations owned by the company in Southern New South Wales. This was as well as managing Yalgogrin. He was to continue being a manager and a superintendent until he resigned from the company in 1905. J.A. also had become a Justice of the Peace in 1896.

in 1897 J.A. moved from Yalgogrin to Borambola station which abuts the Murrumbidgee River, eighteen miles from Wagga Wagga. Sidney and Beatrice Webb visited him there. They wrote of their 1898 visit that J.A. and his

...family were already at lunch when we arrived about 12.30, the party consisting of the husband and wife, an unmarried sister, the book-keeper and a young jackaroo or "colonial experience" young man, together with various youngsters of all sizes and both sexes; later on a travelling school inspector and his friend drove up and joined the party in the usual free and easy Australian fashion. The meal was a scrimmagy mixture of mutton, tea, jam and buns, wire covers protecting some of the eatables from the depredations of the flies that swarmed through the room - (the Australians have not yet tumbled to wire netting over doorways and windows characteristic of the fly devastated districts of America). Our host proved to be an unusually interesting man. Australian born, of Scotch extraction, a successful manager of stations in different districts in New South Wales, he has devoted his leisure to a scientific investigation of Anthrax and had invented and patented a vaccine named after him - the Gunn vaccine. Last year he had vaccinated over one million sheep, receiving from 1½ d. to 2d. for each animal and supplying his own operators as well as his own vaccine. He was delighted to show us over his laboratory and glad enough to find someone interested in his hobby. He was a thorough-going individualist, objecting altogether to Government regulation and the necessity of taking out a license for his experimental work - a fine fellow for all that - hard working and upright, with that interesting combination of speculative intelligence and a keen commercial instinct which is so characteristic of the best type of Scotchman. For the rest he was a materialist in metaphysic, a reactionary in politics, and an autocrat in the home; keeping his woman kind in due subordination to his own requirements, his

[952] *The Australasian Pastoralists' Review* 15 January 1899.

sister, a good-natured raw ugly Scotch girl, doing the housekeeping and looking after the children, and his wife, a delicate little bright minded Melbourne lady, devoting her whole time to keeping his laboratory in perfect order and watching, hour by hour, his "incubating" processes. As might have been expected, the elderly book-keeper was Scotch and the jackaroo was also Scotch and doubtless if we had enquired we would have discovered that the overseer was Scotch: this Station was in fact a little bit of Scotland transplanted; only religion had disappeared and free and easy colonial materialism had taken its place.[953]

and on their return journey the Webbs again visited

...we again lunched with our friend Mr. Gunn. In the evening we dined with him and Mr. Mouritz at the little inn at Wagga. Our pleasant smoke with them in the evening on the balcony overlooking the main street of Wagga Wagga completed our impression that the "managers" formed one of the most hopeful sections of these Australian colonies.[954]

It is an interesting picture of J.A. and his family but not, perhaps, entirely accurate. A.A. Phillips, a distinguished Australian critic, was later to write that Beatrice Webb's "portraits are a little unbalanced by her fondness for finding faults... Nevertheless she has a waspish acumen, and she almost always adds a vividness to our image of these personalities."[955]

At Borambola J.A. was nearly burnt to death in a bushfire. The summer of 1901/1902 was particularly dry and the bushfires were immense. Of the party of three in which he was working to save Borambola pastures one was burnt to death, one survived unharmed and J.A. was burnt about the hands[956]. In January 1903 Boer farmer delegates visited the property; 'which has several miles of frontage to the Murumbidgee and to Tarcutta Creek'.[957]Bushfires also reappeared in the summer of 1903-1904 and in these only the Borambola homestead was left untouched. The local newspaper was stunned and believed that Borambola was the best protected property in the district.

Increasingly J.A. was leaving the Wagga Wagga area and generally in connection with his own business: he often visited Sydney where he stayed at the Hotel Metropole, and he regularly visited Melbourne (even being knocked unconscious by a tram when he was there in 1903.) J.A. was finding it increasingly difficult to fulfil all the demands on his time. He decided to employ his brother Marcus Daniel to act as a temporary manager on Borambola from April 1, 1902. Initially J.A. paid the salary

[953]ed. A.G.Austin, *The Webbs' Australian Diary 1898*, pp.58-60. The two extracts are used with the kind permission of the copyright holders The London School of Economics and Political Science and the publishers Pitman Publishing Pty. Ltd..
[954]Ibid., p. 61.
[955]A.A. Phillips, *Responses: Selected Writings*, "A Lady among the Yahoos," p.138 used with permission of the author.
[956]*The Sydney Morning Herald* 30 December 1901, page 8) reports Mr J.A. Gunn, manager of Borambola, with his brother Norman Gunn, and three station hands, were watching the river for the anticipated crossing of the flames. About 4 p.m. the grass took fire by a point close to them. An attempt was immediately to suppress the outbreak, and for a time it appeared as if their efforts would be successful. The wind suddenly changed, and the men were trapped. Mr. Gunn shouted to the others to follow him and dashed through the flames. It was a frightful experience and those few awful moments are not likely to be forgotten by the unfortunate men… All with the exception of a young man named Frank Curley reached the break, but it appears Curley tried to avoid the flames by making a detour, and in doing so met a horrible death. His charred body was discovered some time later…Mr J.A. Gunn, the manager, also had his hands rather severely burnt…A futile effort was made to save their horses which had been tied up, but three were roasted to death and the other three had eventually to be destroyed…'.
[957]http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/14521956?searchTerm=Gunn being for 'The Sydney Morning Herald' 15 January 1903, page 6. The confluence with the Murumbidgee is about six kilometres south of Oura in the Riverina area of NSW.

from his own wage but the position was ratified with Goldsborough, Mort and Co. and Marcus was made a permanent employee. J.A.'s salary was cut from £350 to £150 to match the salary paid to the new employee.

By mid-1905 J.A. had bought his own property which he called Braehour[958] (it was previously called Gumly Gumly) and which adjoined the Borambola station. In August of this year he was to refer to himself as a "grazier residing at Braehour.., a Bacteriologist and Station Inspector."[959] Increasingly he was leading the life of a wealthy pastoralist – his sons finished their schooling boarding at the leading rural Presbyterian school of Victoria namely Geelong College; he had become a member of various rural pressure groups;[960] he had acquired property ranging from at least four houses in Sydney to land outside Geelong and, in particular, in 1908 he was appointed Chairman of the Council of Advice on Rabbit Extermination[961]. This occurred to a large extent because of his work at Yalgogrin on a chicken cholera virus[962] with which he inoculated rabbits. This disease became known as the "Yalgogrin disease" and was a forerunner of the myxamatosis control of rabbits—the disease also spread to France where it was known as "the Australian disease."

Relationships with McGarvie Smith had not improved. From late 1905 on letters to McGarvie Smith were going via J.A.'s solicitor - on November 12, 1906 J.A. wrote about McGarvie Smith that "the man is a devil neither more nor less and a mad one at that but with the cunning of the devil himself."[963] In 1907 J.A. was writing to the Tax Commissioners apologising for sending in an incomplete return but his partner was not providing him with full financial information.(Interestingly, when the information did come, it seems that J.A.'s income for the 1907 financial year was £3100—an average income at this time could not have been much over £100.) The partnership was brought to arbitration in July 1907 and it still required an arbitrator's services when J.A. died. When the figures were produced for the arbitrator it was shown that J.A. had vaccinated nearly 2,000,000 more sheep than McGarvie Smith at a cost of more than £50 per 100,000 sheep less than McGarvie Smith. Over 13,000,000 sheep had been vaccinated at this time as had sundry other stock.

In many respects the public career of J.A. culminated in his appointment to the Upper House of the New South Wales parliament on 10 July, 1908. As a Member of the Legislative Council J.A. was in a position to exert even more influence[964] over rural life than he had already, especially as then an M.L.C. although not paid was appointed for life.J.A. was, though, a Liberal Party[965] nominee. He tried to help the rural community by taking a major part on a Closer Settlement Bill in 1909, he was on a

[958]http://www.beleura.org.au/History.htm for information about a later owner of Braehour and http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A120184b.htm
[959]Letter, August 1905, Deposit 55, A.N.U. archives.
[960]Before 1897 J.A. was Chairman of the Narrandera Pastures Protection Board. By his death he had been Chairman of the Wagga Wagga P.P.B., Chairman of the P.P.B. Council of Advice in Sydney, a member of the Kyeamba Shire Council, Vice President of the Murrumbidgee Pastoral and Agricultural Association and a member of the Council of the Stockowners' Association of N.S.W.. By 1902 he was a member of the Taxpayers' Union http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/14453128?searchTerm=Gunn . In 1905 he was a member of the Murrumbidgee Fish and Game Protection and Anglers' Society http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/14713190?searchTerm=Gunn
[961] http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/14784643?searchTerm=Gunn and http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/14845100?searchTerm=Gunn
[962]See *The Sydney Morning Herald*, page 6 8 April 1908.
[963]Letter to lawyer, 12 November 1906, Deposit 55, A.N.U. archives.
[964]http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15070625?searchTerm=Gunn for a report on one of his activities.
[965]He was, though, like most of his class and time, an Anglophile. See 'The Mercury' 2 September 1908

select committee for a new Sydney abbatoir and he tried to improve rolling stock to rural areas. General ill-health was, though, restricting him. He was a regular attender for the 1908 and 1909 sittings but J.A. attended only four times in 1910 before being given leave of absence in August 1910. J.A. died in Sydney on the 21st September 1910[966] and was buried in the Presbyterian section of the Rookwood cemetery. His wife (Jessie) and three children (Gladys, Alexander and Angus) succeeded him. A fourth child (Jessie) was buried at Yalgogrin in 1891.

The disagreements with McGarvie Smith[967], though, were to continue[968]. Increasingly McGarvie Smith was to claim most responsibility for the vaccine—he even donated £10,000 to the government for the creation of a McGarvie Smith Institute which was to control the manufacture and use of the vaccine. This Institute was opened in 1918. Jessie[969], on behalf of J.A.'s executors, had already attempted to donate the formula[970] to the State Government however this offer was only accepted after McGarvie Smith's. When the Glenfield Veterinary Research Station was opened in 1923 one wing was to become the Gunn wing[971] to commemorate Jessie's 1918 gift. (The only condition on the gift was that J.A.'s name be associated with it.) The McGarvie Smith Institute still exists and there was a wooden plaque over one door at Glenfield commemorating J.A.. The State Cabinet was involved in the McGarvie Smith - Gunn dispute in 1918—one newspaper was even headed "Anthrax vaccines - manacling the Government."[972] The dispute with McGarvie Smith was never satisfactorily resolved—J.A. believed that "McGarvie Smith is simply green with jealousy and hatred."[973] If so, he hated J.A. for a long time.

J.A. was a man of strong character and major achievements: he was dedicated to science, pastoral work and his family. He was exceptionally hard-working but very popular. He was also a man who achieved much for the Australian pastoral industry—he invented the first mechanical poison-bait layer for rabbit control which was manufactured in Sydney and widely copied; he attempted viral control of rabbits and he stopped anthrax from ruining the Australian livestock industry. He then went on to serve rural Australia from the Parliament of New South Wales. John Alexander Gunn was one of many Australians who made large contributions to a 'young' country with unfortunately little lasting recognition.[974]

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For detailed information see the July 2024 published *Opportunity Makes the Man: The Labours of John Alexaner Gunn* by Peter Symes.

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[966] http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15165918?searchTerm=Gunn for the burial notice and chief mourners.
[967] *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 3 July 1896 gives the background to McGarvie Smith's assorted experiments (photography, electricity, assaying, originally a chronometer maker, snake poison…)
[968] 'Jim Cunningham and other neighbours, who had no doubts at all as to who was mainly responsible for the final discovery, bitterly resented the way in which Gunn's share in it was overlooked.' P. 89, Rob Webster, *Bygoo and Beyond*. And http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15652008?searchTerm=Gunn . And http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15648133?searchTerm=Gunn. And http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/16136760?searchTerm=Gunn
[969] Jessie continued to run Braehour for some years; for example it was reported in *The Argus* 27 December 1916 that one of the haystacks was hit by lightning and destroyed. It was worth £100. http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/1623825?searchTerm=Gunn
[970] http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15806715?searchTerm=Gunn and http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/1754029?searchTerm=Gunn
[971] *The Sydney Morning Herald* 3 November 1923 page 15,
[972] *Daily Telegraph* 25 October 1918.
[973] Letter to lawyer, July 1908, Deposit 55, A.N.U. archives.
[974] http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15178029?searchTerm=Gunn or http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/10477323?searchTerm=Gunn for a summary of his will.

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The Firm issue Certificates, approved of by the Stock Department of Victoria, to owners of stock vaccinated by them in New South Wales, which acts as a passport for such stock to cross the border into Victoria or into New Caledonia during the Anthrax Season. Such Certificates remain operative for twelve months from date of vaccination.

Owing to the great difficulty in preparing a sufficient supply of tested *Single* Vaccine during the rush of the Anthrax Season, the Firm wish it to be understood that, while giving owners the benefit of this process whenever practicable, they reserve the right to give two inoculations when necessary, the scale of rates being the same for either *single* or *double* inoculations. The Vaccine in all cases being administered by their thoroughly trained operators; owners finding and paying catchers.

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Full Particulars on Application to
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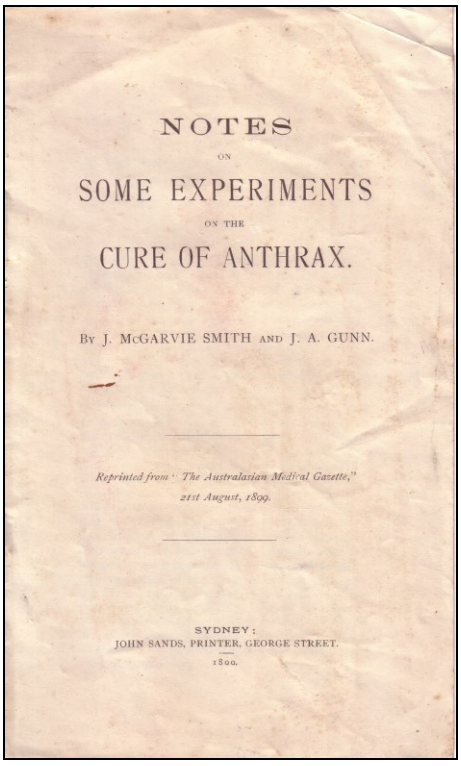
or J. A. GUNN, Braehour, Wagga Wagga.

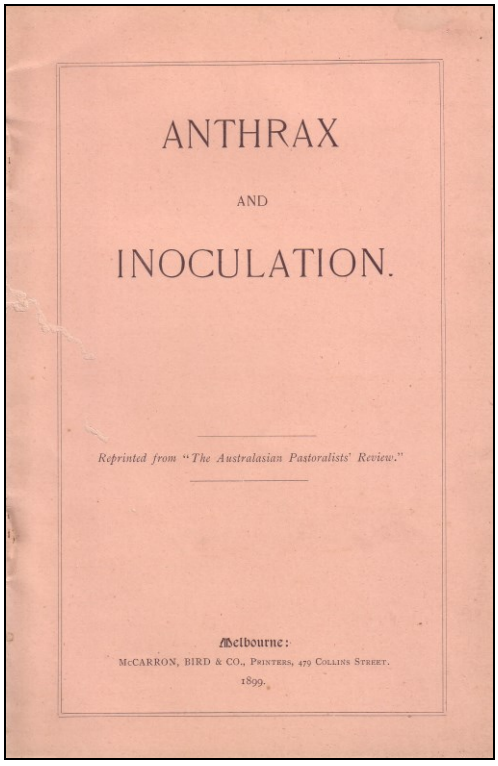


NOTES
ON
SOME EXPERIMENTS
ON THE
CURE OF ANTHRAX.

By J. McGARVIE SMITH and J. A. GUNN.

Reprinted from "The Australasian Medical Gazette," 21st August, 1899.

SYDNEY:
JOHN SANDS, PRINTER, GEORGE STREET.
1900.



ANTHRAX
AND
INOCULATION.

Reprinted from "The Australasian Pastoralists' Review."

Melbourne:
McCARRON, BIRD & CO., Printers, 479 Collins Street.
1899.

Mr Gunn always strongly opposed the use of poisons for dealing with the rabbits. ‘’If this practice is persisted in,’’ he says, ‘’the eventual effect will be the entire destruction of our useful birds, and after that we shall have plagues of insects which will be far more ruinous to rural interests than even the rabbit’’

The Sydney Morning Herald, 26 November 1913

The original J.A. Gunn microscope,
is in the family's ownership, 2007.
A Carl Zeiss Jena 12213 model.

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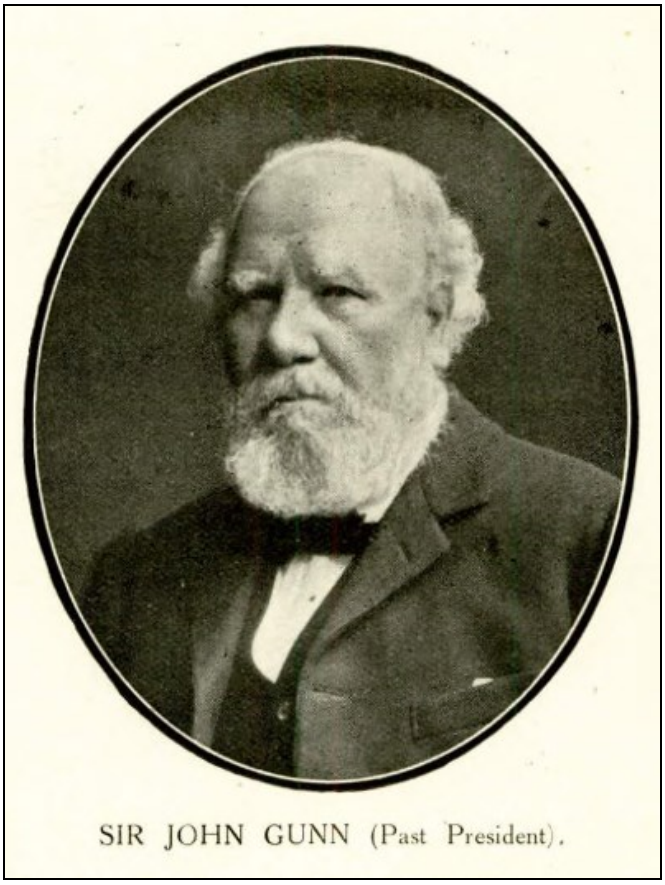
Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale, 1837 - 1918



SIR JOHN GUNN (Past President).

Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale[975] *was the son of Donald Gunn of Bualchork and Ann Mackay. This meant he was the brother of Alexander Gunn of Bualchork and Brawlbin 1789 – 1847 who married Barbara Gunn of Braehour 1810 – 1844. Barbara Gunn was the second child of Donald Gunn 1770 -1861 of Braehour and Brawlbin whose father was John Dalnaglaton Braehour Gunn 1721 -1810 from whose elder brother came the Clan Gunn Chiefs of the 1800s.*

In other words, Sir John Gunn is linked to the Braehour Gunn line which is why he is here in the Braehour Gunns section.

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[975] Further information can be found at 'John O'Groat Journal' 8th February, 1918 (or the *South Wales Daily News* of a little earlier). *Who Was Who 1916-1928* and *Who's Who 1903.* For Sir John Gunn (1916 – 2002) the renowned mathematician and physicist see https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/11953833.sir-john-gunn-university-professor-who-specialised-in-science-research/

Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale was born on 28 October 1837 in Halkirk Parish, Caithness. He was christened 4 November 1837 at Bualchork, Halkirk Parish, Caithness. He died on 20 January 1918 in Cardiff, Glamorgan, aged 80. He married twice - first to Sarah Jane Hill in 1871 in Cardiff, Glamorgan, she died in 1875. He then married Harriette Boyle in 1877 in Belfast. Harriette Boyle was born circa 1846 in Ballymacrea, Antrim. She died in 1914 in Newport, Monmouthshire.

Achlibster farm, 2011. 'Achlibster' is presumed to mean the farm, no village exists today

Sir John Gunn appeared on the census of 6 June 1841 in the household of his parents Donald and Ann in Achlibster, Halkirk Parish, Caithness.[976] He also appeared on the census of 30 March 1851 at the same place.[977] He was educated at Halkirk[978] and had dreams of becoming a lawyer.

At seventeen he moved to Cardiff and entered the drapery business in which he was very successful and so had the capital to move into ship-owning. He also '*was a partner of J. Bland & Co., timber merchants, and to his connection with this firm, of which he was chairman for some years, its progressive advancement was largely due… Sir John was also a director of the North British and Mercantile Insurance Co… He also represented the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce on Lloyd's Register of shipping, as a member of the committee. Sir John Gunn took considerable interest in the operations of the Institute of Marine Engineers, and was associated with the meetings held in Cardiff in connection with the resident membership. He was President of the Institute during the session 1903-4.*[979]

He was also a Kirk elder at Roath Park Presbyterian Church (now St Andrew's United Reformed Church). He was, presumably, buried there in a vault on 24 January 1918. He was also a J.P..

[976] UK Census 06 June 1841: Donald Gunn 40 farmer head; Ann Gunn 30 wife; Hector Gunn 13 son; Donald Gunn 11 son; Janet Gunn 9 daughter; Helen Gunn 7 daughter; Margaret Gunn 5 daughter; John Gunn 3 son; Christina Gunn 1 daughter; all resident at Achlipster.
[977] UK Census 30 March 1851: Donald Gunn 52 head farmer of 14 acres; Ann Gunn 42; Hector Gunn 22; Donald Gunn 19; Janet Gunn 17; Helen Gunn 15; Margaret Gunn 13; John Gunn 11; Christina Gunn 9; Marcus Gunn 5; all resident at Bualchork.
[978] See https://library.imarest.org › record › 1070 › files › 1062.pdf accessed 8 July 2024 and for further details used in this biography.
[979] See https://library.imarest.org › record › 1070 › files › 1062.pdf accessed 8 July 2024 and for further details used in this biography.

And from another biography -

The Mount Stuart Dry Dock (and Engineering Company) *was ... acquired in 1872 by a syndicate of which John Gunn was the principal promoter. Two years later, John was joined by his brother, Marcus who acted as manager ...*

... the two brothers ... decided to enter shipowning themselves when they took delivery of the 1,481 gross tons iron steamer "Dunedin" ... By 1892, John and Marcus Gunn & Co. of 11 Mount Stuart Square, owned a further three vessels: the iron steamers "Cornelia" (894 gross tons, built 1872), "Dunbar" (1,774 gross tons, built 1876), and "Dunkeld" (2,791 gross tons, built 1880). (Technically owned by John and Marcus Gunn & Co.). *... The Gunns' tramp steamers were employed in the coal trade ... The Gunns were involved in a cut-throat business* … (Steamers owned included the 'Lorna Doone' 1896-1898.)

(John Gunn) *was elected as president of the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce in 1886 and 1887 and again in 1897. In 1891 he was chairman of the Cardiff Shipowners' Association. As well as being chairman of the timber importers, John Bland & Co. Ltd., John Gunn held a number of directorships and he was to be found on the boards of the Cardiff Railway Company, the Bristol and West of England Bank, Cardiff Collieries*[980] *(Llanbradach) Ltd. and several other public companies.*

... In 1892 he unsuccessfully contested a Cardiff constituency on the Unionist ticket.[981] *For several years he was a member of Cardiff Town Council*[982] *and in June 1898 ... the Cardiff Caledonian Society, of which he was founder, held a special banquet in celebration of the knighthood conferred upon him ... (he was) the principal founder of the Presbyterian Church in Windsor Place of which he was the senior elder for many years…*

The Gunns' fleet of steamers always remained a modest one ... and by 1899 they had sold the elderly steamers "Cornelia", "Dunbar", and "Dunkeld", leaving them with their first ship, the "Dunedin". In 1903 the "Dunedin" was sold and was replaced by the "Renwick" (664 gross tons, built 1890) which in turn was sold two years later. For their subsequent tramp steamers, the Gunns adopted the limited liability system of ship ownership in which the ownership of each vessel was turned into a limited liability company. ... Honouring their birthplace in Caithness, the Gunn brothers had the steel screw steamer "Achlibster" (4,395 gross tons) built for them in 1906 by Richardson, Duck & Co. of Stockton-on-Tees. Her owners were the Achlibster S. S. Co. Ltd. and was managed by the Gunn brothers. A similar steamer, the "Bilbster", owned by the Bilbster. S. S. Co. Ltd., followed from the same builders in 1908.

In 1911 the managership ... was taken over by A. H. and E. Gunn. Arthur H. Gunn was one of Sir John's three sons (he also had six daughters) and I can only assume that E. Gunn was a son of Marcus Gunn[983]*. The younger Gunns added a third ship to the fleet, the steel screw steamers, "Chalister",*

[980] In 1915, at least. See https://welshcoalmines.co.uk/GlamEast/Llanbradach.htm accessed 8 July 2024.
[981] He lost by 686 votes to Edward Reed of the Liberal Party.
[982] Certainly for 1883-1884. See https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cardiff-records/vol5/pp84-97 accessed 8 July 2024.
[983]He was correct in this assumption; Ernest Gunn (3329) 1878-1916 was a son of Marcus Gunn and Mary Elizabeth Yeandle (3329).

which was built in 1913 by D. & W. Henderson & Co. Ltd., Partick, Glasgow. The "Chalister" was a typical shelter deck tramp steamer and was employed in the deep sea tramping trades throughout her career which lasted until 1942. She had a large cargo carrying capacity but like many such ships, she was underpowered and able to maintain only 8½ knots on 34 tons of coal per day.

The year in which the "Chalister" was built marked the peak of Cardiff's coal exporting prosperity when a staggering 10,576,506 tons of coal was exported. ... During the war itself, many ships were requisitioned by the Admiralty to serve as colliers which were needed to replenish the bunkers of the Royal Navy's warships. The s.s. "Bilbster" was requisitioned to perform this role .... While the "Achlibster" and "Chalister" survived the war, the "Bilbster" was not so fortunate because she was lost after a collision, east of the Azores on 21st November, 1917[984].

Sir John Gunn died on 20th January, 1918 ...

A. H. & E. Gunn sold the "Achlibster" and "Chalister" in 1919 and never resumed shipowning although A. H. Gunn continued as a director of the Mount Stuart Dry Locks Ltd. ...

On exhibition in the 20th Century Merchant Shipping Gallery in the East Wing of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich is a builders' half-model of the s.s. "Chalister". [985]

The model of the "Chalister'' can be seen at (in 2010) the historic Chatham Dockyards in Kent.

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Children of Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale and Sarah Jane Hill, all born in Cardiff, Glamorgan, were –

i. John Donald Gunn was born in 1872. He died in 1872 in Cardiff, Glamorgan.
ii. Herbert Oswald Gunn was born in 1873.
iii. Arthur Hill Gunn was born in 1875. He and Ernest Gunn (the eldest son of Marcus Gunn – the brother to Sir John Gunn) took over managership of the ships 'Achlibster' and 'Bilbster' from John and Marcus Gunn in 1911 in Cardiff, Glamorgan and added the steel screw steamer 'Chalister' to the family fleet in 1913. They sold the 'Achlibster' and 'Chalister' in 1919 and never resumed shipowning. Arthur remained a director of the Mount Stuart Dry Locks Ltd in 1919 in Cardiff, Glamorgan.

Children of Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale and Harriette Boyle also all born in Cardiff, were:

i. Annie Boyle GUNN was born in 1879. She married Frederick George Penny 20 July 1905 in Cardiff, Glamorgan. (He was created 1st Viscount Marchwood, of

[984] http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/15614673?searchTerm=Gunn from a 1915 article concerning the 'Bilbster'; it carried 6710 tons of metal from the Australian Metal Company consigned to a company to London but really destined for Germany. The claim was whether the Gunns could claim the freight or whather it belonged to the Crown. It was reported in London on September 17. In October 'The Argus' of 8 October reports that J. and M. Gunn would get £2,546 of the proceeds and also see 'The Argus' of 20 September 1915, page 7.
[985] Being from P. R. Myers, "Sir John Gunn, the Cardiff Business Entrepreneur from Caithness," *The Caithness Field Club Journal* (October 1983).

Penang, and of Marchwood, co. Southampton on 13 September 1945.) She died 20 April 1957. Descendants.

ii. Winifred Mackay GUNN was born in 1879. She married Francis Brodie Lodge, son of Sir Oliver Joseph Lodge and Mary Fanny Alexander Marshall, in 1909 in Cardiff, Glamorgan. They divorced in 1928. Francis Brodie LODGE was born in 1880. He died in 1967. He and Alec Lodge took out a patent for an improved system of high tension ignition for motor vehicles in 1903[986]. He and Alec Lodge formed a partnership, Lodge Bros, in 1904 at 4 New Street, Birmingham, West Midlands. They opened their first workshop in 1907 in Wrentham Street, Birmingham, West Midlands. Francis was the founder, with his brother Alec, of the Lodge Plug Company, manufacturer of spark plugs for cars and aeroplanes. He assembled one of the world's largest collections of Chinese ceramics and bronzes.

iii. Olive Mildred GUNN was born in 1881.

iv. Elsie Maud GUNN was born in 1882.

v. Hester Boyle GUNN was born in 1885.

vi. John Boyle GUNN was born in 1888.

vii. Marjorie Lilian GUNN was born in 1889. She married Frederic Stratton in 1913 in Cardiff, Glamorgan.

Marcus Gunn 1842 – 1899, brother of Sir John Gunn of Tormsdale

Marcus Gunn was a younger brother to Sir John Gunn and was born on 5 May 1842 in Bualchork, Halkirk Parish, Caithness. He was christened 9 May 1842 at the same place. He married Mary Elizabeth Yeandle in 1877 in Shurdington, Gloucestershire. She was born in 1855.

The children of Marcus Gunn and Mary Elizabeth Yeandle, all born in Cardiff, Glamorgan, were:

i. Ernest GUNN was born in 1878. He died in 1916 in Cardiff, Glamorgan. Ernest and Arthur Hill Gunn, a son of Sir John Gunn, took over managership of the ships Achlibster and Bilbster from John & Marcus Gunn in 1911 in Cardiff, Glamorgan. He and Arthur Hill Gunn added the steel screw steamer 'Chalister' to the family fleet in 1913. He and Arthur Hill Gunn sold the ‘Achlibster’ and ‘Chalister’ in 1919 and never resumed shipowning.

ii. Beatrice McKay GUNN was born in 1880.

iii. Marcus Sinclair GUNN was born in 1890.

[986]See http://www.macrugby.com/history-lodge.htm for further details about the Lodge family.

Marcus appeared on the census of 30 Mar 1851 in the household of his parents Donald and Ann in Bualchork, Halkirk Parish, Caithness.[987] He was appointed manager of the Mount Stuart Dry Dock in 1874 in Cardiff, Glamorgan. He and Sir John Gunn were the owners of four ships, 'Dunedin', 'Cornelia', 'Dunbar' and 'Dunkeld' in 1892 owned by 'John and Marcus Gunn & Co.'. He and Sir John Gunn had the 4395 gross ton 'Achlibster' built in honour of their birthplace in 1906. He and Sir John Gunn had the 'Bilbster', similar to the 'Achlibster', built in 1908. He was present when Arthur Hill Gunn and Ernest Gunn took over managership of the ships 'Achlibster' and 'Bilbster' from John and Marcus Gunn in 1911 in Cardiff, Glamorgan. He was present when Arthur Hill Gunn and Ernest Gunn added the steel screw steamer 'Chalister' to the family fleet in 1913. Marcus died in September 1899 in Cardiff, Glamorgan, at age 57.

He was a strong supporter of the Cardiff Free Library, there was a bust of him donated to the Library.

Newspaper obituary for Marcus Gunn

"The South Wales Daily News reported in 1899 the death, after a short illness, of Marcus Gunn, a native of Caithness and one of the most prominent business men in Cardiff. He was 54 years of age and best known in commercial circles outside Cardiff as a member of the firm of J. and M. Gunn, shipowners, his partner being his brother, Sir John Gunn. The firm was largely interested in the Mountstuart Dry Dock Company, who were entrusted with the work of raising the *City of Paris* from the Falmouth. The firm was also interested in Bland & Co. Timber merchants as well as other local enterprises. A remarkably able business man Marcus was often invited to devote time to public work, but the Free Library and Infirmary were the only institutions in whose management he took an active interest. His private library contained many rare volumes.

He was born at Westerdale, Caithness in 1845 and went to South Wales in 1864 as representative of a manufacturing firm in the North of England. After a short absence, when he filled the position of representative of an engineering firm at Glasgow he returned to Cardiff to join his brother in business at the Mountstewart Dry Dock and Engineering Works, subsequently becoming a partner in the undertaking. At the time of his death he was one of the directors of the company, as well as a director of Bland & Co. He left a widow and six children, the eldest son having attained his majority.

"Northern Ensign", undated, 1903

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[987] UK Census 30 March 1851: Donald Gunn 52 head farmer of 14 acres; Ann Gunn 42; Hector Gunn 22; Donald Gunn 19; Janet Gunn 17; Helen Gunn 15; Margaret Gunn 13; John Gunn 11; Christina Gunn 9; Marcus Gunn 5; all resident at Bualchork.

Descendants of Sir John Gunn and Marcus Gunn

- ***John GUNN (Sir) of Tormsdale**, b. 28 Oct 1837 Halkirk Parish, Caithness, d. 20 Jan 1918 Cardiff, Glamorgan*
  - +**Sarah Jane HILL**, m. 1871 Cardiff, Glamorgan, d. 1875
    - **John Donald GUNN**, b. 1872 Cardiff, Glamorgan, d. 1872 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Herbert Oswald GUNN**, b. 1873 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Arthur Hill GUNN**, b. 1875 Cardiff, Glamorgan
  - +**Harriette BOYLE**, b. c. 1846 Ballymacrea, Antrim, m. 1877 Belfast, d. 1914 Newport, Monmouthshire
    - **Annie Boyle GUNN**, b. 1879 Cardiff, Glamorgan
      - +**Frederick George PENNY**, m. 1905 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Winifred Mackay GUNN**, b. 1879 Cardiff, Glamorgan
      - +**Francis Brodie LODGE**, b. 1880, m. 1909 Cardiff, Glamorgan, d. 1967
    - **Olive Mildred GUNN**, b. 1881 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Elsie Maud GUNN**, b. 1882 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Hester Boyle GUNN**, b. 1885 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **John Boyle GUNN**, b. 1888 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Marjorie Lilian GUNN**, b. 1889 Cardiff, Glamorgan
      - +**Frederic STRATTON**, m. 1913 Cardiff, Glamorgan
- ***Marcus GUNN**, b. 5 May 1842 Bualchork, Halkirk Parish, Caithness, d. Sep 1899 Cardiff, Glamorgan*
  - +**Mary Elizabeth YEANDLE**, b. 1855, m. 1877 Shurdington, Gloucestershire
    - **Ernest GUNN**, b. 1878 Cardiff, Glamorgan, d. 1916 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Beatrice McKay GUNN**, b. 1880 Cardiff, Glamorgan
    - **Marcus Sinclair GUNN**, b. 1890 Cardiff, Glamorgan

Ships / boats owned by J. and M. Gunn

‘Caledon’; 384 gross tonnage and 303 net tonnage. 127.2 x 25.5 x 14.8 feet. She was a three mast planked on iron frame vessel. She was completed in August 1866 in Middlesborough by Harkass for Jones Bros. and named the ‘R.H. Jones’. In around 1875 she was sold to R. Cowell and Co of Cardiff who renamed her ‘Richard Cowell’. She was surveyed in Cardiff in 1878 and acquired by J. and M. Gunn who renamed it the ‘Caledon’. She was not in the Lloyds Register after 1884.

‘Dunedin’; 2,284 gross tonnage and 1,412 net tonnage. 286 x 37.3 x 22.9 feet. She was an iron steamship, compound two cylinders by the builders. She was completed in September 1883 by W. Doxford and Sons, Sunderland for J. and M. Gunn as the ‘Dunedin’. In 1901 she was sold to the Bank of Athens and renamed the ‘Beeby’. She was wrecked in 1908.

‘Dunbar’; 1,812 gross tonnage and 1,182 net tonnage. 280.2 x 34.0 x 24.0 feet. She was an iron steamship, compound two cylinders by R. Stephenson and Co. Newcastle. She was completed by W. Doxford and Sons, Sunderland for Farnham and Co. Newcastle and called ‘Peer of the Realm’. She was acquired J. and M. Gunn in 1885 and called the ‘Dunbar’, after various other companies had briefly owned her. She was posted missing in March 1898 on a voyage from Theodisia to Leith, with a cargo of barley.

‘Dunkeld’; 2,796 gross tonnage and 2,117 net tonnage. 320.8 x 40.5 x 23.2 feet. She was an iron steamship, compound two cylinders by the builders. She was completed in 1880 by A. Stephens and Co. Glasgow and called ‘Katie’. First trace of an owner is in 1887 wher she was owned by Christopher Furness. In 1889 J. and M. Gunn acquired her and renamed her ‘Dunkeld’. She was lost east of Lobos Island, Uruguay, when on a voyage from Barry Dock, Wales, to Buenos Aires with a cargo of coal.

‘Cornelia’; 903 gross tonnage, 553 net tonnage. 220.3 x 29.2 x 16.3 feet. She was an iron steamship, compound two cylinders by T. Richardson and Sons, Hartlepool. She was completed in January 1872 by Denton, Grays and Co. West Hartlepool for Fritz Herskind of West Hartlepool and was called the ‘Cornelia’. In 1886 the owners became Herskind and Woods. In 1889 she was acquired by J. and M. Gunn. On 13 August 1897 she was sold to Cornelia Steamship Co. Ltd. Of Cardiff, being Guthrie, Heywood and Co. She was then sold to William Monroe of Cardiff on 8 May 1900. On 6 March 1917 she was captured by SM UC-43 (being a German Type 11 mine-laying submarine) and sunk by gunfire nine miles northwest of the Skelligs whilst on a voyage from Oporto to Cardiff with a cargo of pitwood. The SM UC-43 was sunk four days later at Muckle Flugga.

‘Renwick’; 664 gross tonnage, 402 net tonnage. 180 x 28.1 x13.7 feet. She was a steel steamship; 3 cylinders by N.E. Marine Engineering Co of Newcastle. She was completed by Tyne 1 Shipbuilders of Newcastle for Renwick S.S. Co. (Fisher, Renwick and Co.) as ‘Renwick’. March 1903 she was stranded and wrecked. She was acquired by Sir John Gunn on 1 April 1904 and sold on 14 May 1906 to R. M. Horne-Payne of Walbrook, London which became the Renwick Co. Ltd (H.W. Harding) of Newcastle in c. 1907. She was sunk by collision in December 1911.

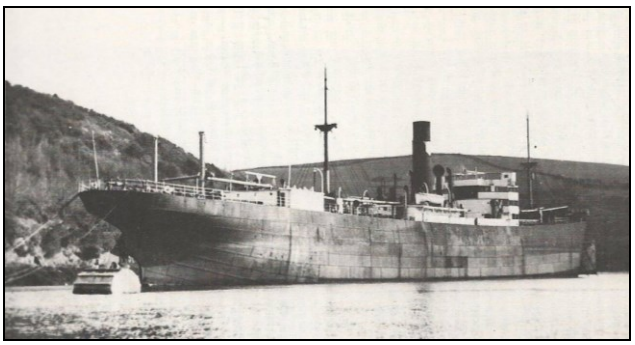
‘Coronation’; 2,461 gross tonnage, 1,574 net tonnage. 286 x 40.7 x 18.2 feet. She was a steel steamship; 3 cylinders by Hutson and Son, Glasgow. She was completed by Grangemouth Dockyard Co in July 1894 for Macbeth and Gray, Glasgow and named ‘Dunblane’. In 1894 she was sold to M. Angel Cardiff and reamed the ‘Phyllis Angel’. On 26 May 1902 she was acquired by Sir John Gunn and renamed the ‘Coronation’. In 1903 she was onsold and renamed the ‘Wilhelmine’. There is no record of her in Lloyds Register after 1904; perhaps she went to Germany given the last name?

‘Achlibster’; 4,395 gross tonnage and 2,820 net tonnage. 355.2 x 51.1 x 26.8 feet. She was a steel steamship; 3 cylinders by Blair and Co. Ltd. of Stockton-on-Tees. She was completed February 1906 by Richardson, Duck and Co. Stockton for Achlibster S.S. Co. Ltd (J. and M. Gunn and Co. Cardiff). She was later sold to Humphries of Cardiff and renamed ‘Glofield’. In c. 1927 she was then sold to Watts, Watts and Co and renamed ‘Hampstead’. Later she was sold to N. A. Cottakis of Greece and renamed ‘Alecos’. She was wrecked in 1935.

‘Bilbster’; 4,478 gross tonnage and 2,790 net tonnage. 355.4 x 51.1 x 26.8 feet. She was a steel steamship; 3 cylinders by Blair and Co. Ltd. Stockton. She was completed January 1908 by Richardson, Duck and Co. of Stockton-on-Tees for Bilbster S.S. Co Ltd. (J. and M. Gunn Cardiff). In 1915 she was on Lloyds Register for A.H. Gunn and in 1917 for A.H. and E. Gunn. Ther are reports that she was naval collier during the First World War but another source says she carried oil fuel; she may have done both. On approximately 21 November 1919 she was lost in a collision east of the Azores.

‘Chalister’; 5,344 gross tonnage and 3,369 net tonnage. She was a steel shelter deck steamship; 3 cylinders by the builders. She was completed by D. and W. Henderson and Co.Ltd of Glasgow for Chalister S.S. Co. Ltd (J. and M. Gunn and Co. Ltd.) in August 1913. In 1917 (possibly 1919) she was sold to Anglo-Newfoundland S.S. Co and in 1920 then sold to R.McLelland of Kingston, Ontario, Canada. She was then sold to Adam Bros., of Greenock in 1922. In 1924 she was sold to Turnbull, Scott Shipping and renamed the ‘Haggersgate’. In March 1936 she was sold to Seerederei Frigga of Germany and renamed the ‘Hodur’. On 20 April 1943 she was sunk by HM submarine ‘Trident’ northwest of Namsos, Norway.

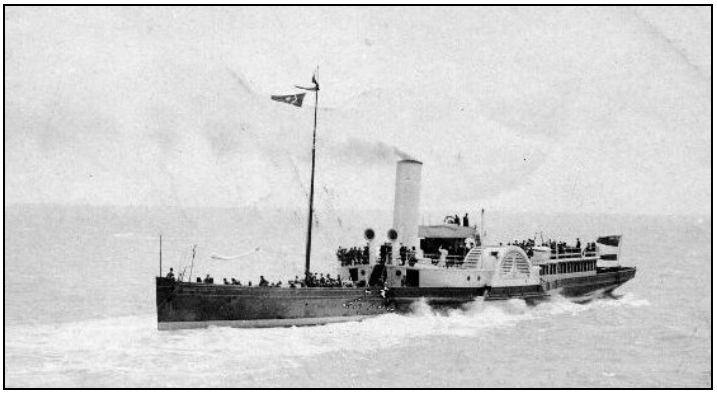
S.S. Chalister



S.S. Chalister 1924?

John Gunn and Co. registered vessels 1896 -1899

These vessels were leased / hired.



S.S. Bonnie Doon

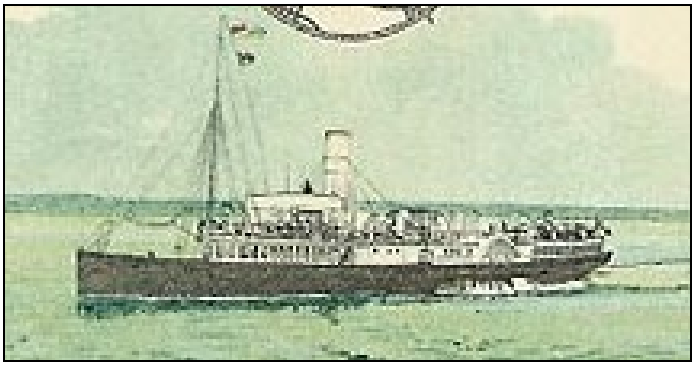
'Bonnie Doon' a steam paddle steamer; 272 gross tonnage and 81 net tonnage. The builders were T. B. Scath and Co, in 1876; 1 cylinder by A. Campbell and Sons Glasgow. She was registered by John Gunn in October 1896 and certainly by 1899 was in other hands. She 'early on acquired the nickname 'Bonnie Beakdoon[988]'' She was broken up in 1913 in Rotterdam.

[988] http://website.lineone.net/~tom_lee/bonniedoonimg.htm

‘Lord Tredegar’ was an iron paddle steamer; 179 gross tonnage and 12 net tonnage. 192.1 x 18 x 7.4 feet. The vessel was completed by Fullerton and Co. Paisley for Lochgoil Steamboat company, named ‘Carrick Castle’. It was also renamed ‘Lady Margaret’ in 1888 and then ‘Lord Tredegar’ in 1896. It was in the name of John Gunn in October 1896 as ‘Lord Tredegar’ (being a minor aristocratic family with a notable eccentric to finish the line).

‘Scotia’ was an iron paddle steamer; 303 gross tonnage and 38 net tonnage. 211.2 x 21.8 x 8.3 feet. The vessel was in the name of John Gunn in October 1896 Lloyds Register. In 1903 it was the ‘Principessa Mafalda Epomea’.

‘Rover’ was an iron paddle steamer; 188 gross tonnage and 87 net tonnage. 140.6 x 20.1 x 8.2 feet. It was originally called the ‘Chepstow’ and built in 1874 for the Great Western Railway Co. It was in the name of John Gunn in 1896. It was wrecked in 1896.



S.S. Lorna Doone

‘Lorna Doone’ was a steam paddle steamer; 427 gross tonnage and 83 net tonnage. 220.05 x 26 x 9.2 feet; 2 cylinders by D. Rowan and Son Glasgow. In the name of J. Gunn October 1896, by 1899 sold to the Isle of Wight Steam Packet Co..

14. Further bits and pieces

14.1 MacRob / Braemore Gunns

The Robson Gunns were certainly a lawless set of thieves[989]

The most visible Gunn line other than the MacHamish / Killernan line from the Coroner are the descendants of Robert Gunn, the probable second son of the Coroner. These descendants become the MacRobs (Robsons); note how MacRobs and MacHamish are both nothing more than indicators of a particular Gunn family. The MacRob Gunns and the MacHamish Gunns are both significant families which suggest inherited wealth from the Coroner. Robert's elder son was John Gunn MacRob of Strathy. The MacRob Gunn genealogy is quite traceable.[990] The Braemore Gunns descend from Donald Gunn, the second son of Robert Gunn. Like much of the MacHamish Gunn 'history' the MacRob 'history' also suffers from many myths. See chapter 7.2 and 7.3 for some Gunn Braemore stories. The Rattoo Gunns of Ireland probably descend from the Braemore Gunns. It is useful to view the MacRob Gunns as the main Gunn family of Caithness, just as one can view the MacHamish Gunns as the leading Gunn family of Sutherland in historical times.

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(1) The 1565 event

Sir Robert Gordon records[991] that in 1565 Alexander *'Gun'* of the Braemore MacRob Gunn family line was executed[992] due to an etiquette squabble worthy of the Blackadder television show. This Alexander Gunn was in the service of the Earl of Sutherland and would not give way to the Earl of Moray – who was the illegitimate son of King James V and later[993] Regent of Scotland - when the Earls of Sutherland and Huntly met the Earl of Moray in the street in Aberdeen. Alexander was *'in service with the Earle of Southerland'* and was walking ahead of the Earls of Sutherland and Huntly and did not get off the footpath to let the Earl of Moray have right of way. The Earl of Moray was blamed for later organising Alexander's execution on some charge. Gordon also records that this Alexander had a son Alexander, and the executed Alexander's father was *'John Robson … by Earl Adam his bastard daughter'.*[994]

This story is questionable. This Gunn was only a servant - surely if a servant had any brains then he would let an Earl have right of way, especially an Earl who was the son of a King. But the story gets even more doubtful. This story involving Gunn is not readily found elsewhere, one would have thought that such detail should be well known and fully written as it involves the Earl of Moray who was a significant person in Scottish history as he was later Regent of Scotland and what's more the Earl is

[989] Quoted page 86, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.
[990] See, for example, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Munroe accessed 21 March 1019.
[991] Page 144, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[992] Page 80, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* using Sir Robert Gordon.
[993] Page 84, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn* says the Earl of Moray was Regent at this time. That is historically wrong.
[994] Page 144, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*

viewed as *'The Gude Regent'*[995] implying he wasn't in for petty squabbles. The implication is that later historians find the story questionable and lacking in primary evidence.

The event is actually extremely questionable - one needs to look at the total story in Sir Robert Gordon's book. The Gunn story is at the end of a few pages[996] detailing how the Earl of Huntly, the Earl of Moray and the Earl of Sutherland had been clashing with each other in all sorts of major ways over a period of time. These clashes included jail, possible execution, property seizure and so on. In particular the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Moray had massive previous reasons for hating each other and the Earl of Sutherland also had good reason to hate the Earl of Moray. And who was the Earl of Huntly? The Earl of Huntly was the historian Sir Robert Gordon's uncle so one has to question this unsupported Gunn story written by Sir Robert Gordon, involving the otherwise liked Earl of Moray due to possible family bias on Sir Robert Gordon's part.[997]

So this Alexander MacRob Gunn story deserves to be questioned; it needs supportive evidence before it can be accepted. Currrently it seems just a bit too close to fiction, like so much Gunn 'history'. And it's not clear which Alexander Gunn it is meant to be…

(2) 1569-1599 or so

Sir Robert Gordon notes a 1569 killing of important MacRob Gunns by Mackays, at Balnakeil at Durness, at the Earl of Caithness's instigation as he did not like those Gunns support for the Earl of Sutherland, which began a long series of raids and counter raids. Gordon decided that he would *'pass ...* (the many raids) *over'*[998] and without his knowledge it is sensible to mainly do so. By implication it was a series of minor event after minor event with everyone to blame. One can find detail of some of these events in history texts, including a fairly serious attempt by the Earl of Caithness, the Earl of Sutherland and the Mackays to get rid of the Gunns; in particular in the mid-1580s. But as Sir Robert Gordon points out it was against *'chiefly such of that tribe as dwelt in Caithness, because they were judged to be the principal authors of those troubles and commotions which were likely to ensure in that diocese.'*[999] I would view 'Caithness Gunns' as shorthand for MacRob Gunns and some others.[1000]

Overall what one is looking at in the northern Highlands of the 1500s is not complete lawlessness beloved by traditional Gunn 'histories' but a time when various powers with legal rights – in particular the Earl of Caithness, the Earl of Sutherland and the Chief of Mackays - fight, at times, for control and use Gunns (and others) as underlings in a series of power squabbles. It is an area where these events are on record and a broad view is worthwhile; the minutiae is fairly tedious.

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[995] Page 111, ed. K McCue and P. Perkins *Women's Travel Writings in Scotland, Volume 4.*
[996] Page 143, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[997] As already discussed, any Gunn event *not* mentioned by Sir Robert Gordon must be questioned as to the source of the much later new stories; they are generally fiction. However just because Gordon recounts them one must also consider whether they are true; the closer the events to his family I would suggest the more likely the story is to be 'shaped' for family propaganda. As well, note that in Gordon this Alexander had a son Alexander; this son does not appear on the 1868 / 1879 trees, the 1896 tree, nor on Mark Rugg Gunn's *Clan Gunn* tree on page 158. The story has the son as a 'bastard' though and so he may not have remained on 'formal' trees.
[998] Page 174, Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[999] Quoted page 44, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[1000] Page 86, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*, pages 44 – 73 onwards in Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns.*

(3) The burning at Sandside

The burning at Sandside is a serious incident which ends with the removal of some Gunns from Caithness for a while…

Sir Robert Gordon records that in 1615 the Earl of Caithness – who was against Lord Forbes for all sorts of reasons - first got *'John Robson alias John Gunn'*[1001] to *'invade'* Lord Forbes land but that plan did not go ahead as Lord Forbes was away from home. The Earl then dealt (bribed? told lies?) *'earnestlie with John Robson… and with his brother Alexander Gunn… he dealeth also with ther cousin*-german (full brother) *Alexander George-sone'*[1002] to burn the corn at Sandside, being owned by a servant of Lord Forbes. Gordon says Alexander Robson agreed to the Earl's request and so with two others the crime was committed. This caused all sorts of problems, a law case in Edinburgh, confusion and the loss of all sorts of honours and possessions owned by the Earl of Caithness as the Robsons Gunns explained all in court. Presumably in consequence in 1619 the Earl of Caithness arranged it so all Gunns '*were dispossessed of whatsoever lands and possession they had from the Earl of Caithness.'*[1003] You get the idea; Robson Gunns were not exactly law-abiding… Mind you, the Earl of Caithness was hardly on the side of the law…

Colonel Sir William Gunn was[1004] a nephew of one of the arsonists. Colonel William Gunn served in the Swedish army and in France and England. He had contacts with Cromwell's army. *'After 1655, Gunn disappears from view in both Stuart and Cromwellian correspondence, … with little being possible to confirm other than his death at some point between 1661-1663.'*[1005] It is probable he had a brother Donald Gunn of Dirlot[1006], a cousin (possibly brother) John Gunn in Easterdale;[1007] much of the family can be traced. A fuller account can be found in Mark Rugg Gunn.[1008]

[1001] Page 75, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns.*
[1002] Page 331 Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.*
[1003] Page 112, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*, quoting Sir Robert Gordon.
[1004] https://journals.openedition.org/etudesecossaises/215#ftn19 accessed 10 July 2018.
[1005] Page 67, David Worthington, *British and Irish Experiences and Impressions of Central Europe c. 1560-1688.*
[1006] Page 114, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[1007] Page 114, Thomas Sinclair, *ibid*.
[1008] Page 125-129, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*.

(3) The Gun Munro family of Poyntzfield, being probably the senior line of the MacRobs.
Robert had at least two, possibly three sons; the two main lines are from Donald (Braemore) and John MacRob (Strathy). One view[1009] is that the Braemore Gunns were senior but the MacRob (Strathy) Gunns were the more visible / violent and, in consequence, better known. There are various stories about the generations in Mark Rugg Gunn[1010] and elsewhere and the genealogy can be followed in the 1896 tree. The most well known – and I think most senior - family comes from the Braemore side; the Gunn Munros of Poyntzfield. The 1896 tree has

1. Robert Gunn (2nd son of the Coroner)
2. David Donaldson Gunn
3. Alan Davidson Gunn
4. John Gunn
5. George Gunn
6. **Janet Gunn married the Rev. John Munro** around 1704 from whom come the Gunn Munros.

Janet Gunn and Rev. John Munro[1011] - the Gunn Munros – had

1. William Gun Munro dwi.
2. Captain John Gun Munro married (1) Elizabeth Sutherland and later (2) Christian MacKenzie
3. Sir George Gun Munro married Mary (Hinde) Poyntz 1760. They had ten children. This is the start of the **Gunn Munros of Poyntzfield.**
4. Henry Gun Munro c1727-c1782 married Sarah Hooper in Granville Nova Scotia. Henry was a soldier before fighting and staying in North America. He became a politician.

The **Gunn Munros of Poyntzfield** were –

1. Sir George Gunn Munro son of Janet Gunn of Braemore and Rev. John Munro of Halkirk.
2. He was followed by his nephew George Gunn Munro, son of his older brother Captain John Gunn Munro of Braemore. George Gunn Munro died July 1, 1806. He had married Justina Dunbar, daughter of William Dunbar, Forres. They did not have children. An illegitimate son of George Gunn's was Treasurer of the Colony of Grenada.
3. Sir George Gunn Munro's nephew Col. Innis Munro succeeded; he was also son of John Gunn Munro and Elizabeth Sutherland.
4. Upon Col. Innis Gunn Munro's death in 1827 his son, Major George Gunn Munro succeeded to Poyntzfield. He married Jemima Charlotte Graham in 1822. Major George Gunn Munro was knighted in 1842. Major, Sir George Gunn Munro[1012] died at Strathpeffer Spa in 1852.

The Gunn Munro line continues and can be readily found on the internet.

[1009] Page 93, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*.
[1010] Page 93, Mark Rugg Gunn, *ibid*. and following pages.
[1011] Abstracted from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Munroe accessed 9 July 2018.
[1012] Page 26, Alexander Mackenzie, *The Highland Clearances* tells of how Sir George Gunn Munro tried to help the establishment of a Free Church in Dornoch but the Sutherland Estate stopped him from doing so.

14.2 The Covenanters, especially 1639-1640

The Scottish covenanting movement was essentially about Presbyterians keeping their Presbyterianism and renunciation of anything and everything Roman Catholic. It's a problem if you supported it as although for a while it was successful - it was for a while a sort of government and had its own army - when Charles II regained the throne he rejected the whole covenant idea.

In the troubled time of the Covenanters *'Aberdeen ... and most of the Highlands – stood aloof'*[1013] and there is no reason to suppose Gunns overall behaved differently from the majority of the Highlands. I have, though, found one reference to some Gunns as covenanters in 1647.[1014] Sinclair has the Gunns *'taking the side of the landed proprietors'*[1015] which makes sense; one does not want to offend the landlords as otherwise one ends up homeless. Of interest is that in 1639 there was a battle at Aberdeen[1016] (a Roman Catholic town) between Catholic and Presbyterian forces; and *'crowner Gun, with diverse other English captains and officers*'[1017] – crowner[1018] meaning here a colonel - was there on the Roman Catholic, English side. Who *'crowner Gun'* was though is unknown.

The whole covenanting story is complex, partially merges with the English Civil War but its relevance to Gunns as a whole is minimal.

[1013] Page 209, J. D. Mackie, *A History of Scotland.*
[1014] Page 124, *Northern Scotland Volumes 7-9.*
[1015] Page 90, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.
[1016] Pages 128-129, John Spalding, *The History of the Troubles and Memorable Transactions in Scotland, From 1624-1645.*
[1017] Page 148, John Spalding, *ibid*.
[1018] Page 243, Francis Grose, *Military Antiquities, Respecting a History of the English Army Volume 1*; *'colonel ... This officer is by some of our ancient military writers called coronell, crownell... crowner...'.* One sees the problem again of no defined spelling for printers and just trying to spell by the sound of words.

14.3 Jacobite rebellions and Gunn non-involvement

Given the non-commitment of the Gunns to the Stuart cause and the strength of the Sutherland Estate one should view the Jacobite rebellions as basically irrelevant to the Gunns…
Neil Oliver[1019]

The Jacobite rebellions all had the same aim; restoring the last Catholic King of England and Scotland. These rebellions included the 1689-1690 (including the Glencoe massacre) period, the 1715 uprising where the 'Old Pretender' James Stuart arrived in Scotland and led an uprising but later fled. Finally there was the 1745 uprising of Bonnie Prince Charlie which also failed. The emotional appeal of the Jacobite rebellions is undeniable and is the stuff of many a film. Bonnie Prince Charlie, in particular, has had great propaganda. Real history, however, is markedly different from the movies.

The first point about these rebellions is the major issue of religion. The Highlanders were most commonly Presbyterian but the Stuarts were Catholic (although with some Episcopalian support). To support the Jacobites as a Highlander was to go against the dominant religion and risk losing all one's possessions, including land as the landowners were all basically Protestant. The Sutherland Estate landowners were Protestant; if Gunns fought with the Jacobites they could expect serious problems as they lived on the Sutherland Estate. At least one map[1020] has everything north of Inverness in the 1689 rebellion as either neutral or pro-government. Gunns are down as pro-government. The accompanying authorial comment is *'Jacobitism was indelibly tainted by Catholicism and this ensued it had little appeal for most Scots'*. So, logic and religious culture were against the Gunns having any role in the support of the Jacobite rebellion.

This is supported by evidence. I cannot find Gunns listed as supporting the 1715 rebellion.[1021] Material relating to Chiefs of some Clans and their involvement in 1715 can be found;[1022] the lack of Gunn reference again strongly suggests lack of Gunn involvement, not least due to the Gunns not having a Chief. However, in the folk song *'The Chevalier's Muster-Roll'* there is a list of those supporting the rebellion with the line *'Donald Gun and a's coming.'*[1023] If the mentioned Donald was meant to refer to Donald Crotach Gunn (9,15) of Killearnan / Badanloch then that Donald was dead by 1715 – see the discussion in his life. So if the song is meant to provide history there is no known Donald Gunn around as a potential leader. It has to be viewed as just a later written song, not an historic record – it was first known printed in 1803[1024] which is a long time after 1715 so this song should be ignored as history. It is worth noting that the Lord Sutherland could have one thousand men out in support of the Hanoverian – and against the Jacobite - cause[1025] which, one assumes, would include some Gunns.

[1019] Page 173, Neil Oliver, *A History of Scotland*.
[1020] John Haywood and Barry Cunliffe, *The Historical Atlas of the Celtic World*.
[1021] For example, in Page 97, James Logan, *The Scottish Gael, Volume 1.* There is also no mention of any Gunn involvement in any of the uprisings in Murray Pittock's *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans.*
[1022] For example, the MacDougall Chiefs in Jean MacDougall's *Highland Postbag The Correspondence of Four MacDougall Chiefs 1715-1865.*
[1023] See http://chrsouchon.free.fr/muster.htm for the full song accessed 20 February 2019.
[1024] http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/021TheHighlandMusterRoll1715.pdf accessed 11 July 2018.
[1025] Page 97, James Logan, *The Scottish Gael, Volume 1.*

There is no support for the Gunns having anything more than a token involvement in the 1745 uprising. The Gunn muster in Prince Charles Edward Stuart's army was four; Angus Gunn a husbandman of Lairn, Donald Gunn of Caithness (being a deserter from Lord Loudon's), Donald Gunn a husbandman of Dunbeath and John Gunn of Stoneywood.[1026] Worth noting that it is estimated that under one third of the potential Highland fighting force did fight on the side of "Prince Charlie' – the idea that all Highlanders were Jacobites is not supported by fact.[1027] However, we know Alexander Gunn (10,19) of Badanloch, was one of the 'List of Officers of Independent Companies raised in the year 1745'[1028] as part of the anti-Jacobite military forces; he was there as an individual; his company was not a Gunn company. He was serving for the Government (and really the landowner). For more detail on his involvement see his life.

There is a detailed historical document of 1748 – a *'Memorial, said to be drawn up by the Lord President Forbes of Culloden was transmitted to Government detailing the force of every clan, the tenures of every chieftain, and the amount of retainers which he could bring into the field ... Besides the clans enumerated in this in this curious document, there were a number of independent gentlemen, who had many followers, but being what were called broken names, or small tribes, they are omitted in the Lord President's report.'*[1029] This document was about the potential for military action – one way or another - by the Highlanders; the Gunns were not mentioned at all with the implication they were, at most, but a small tribe (and certainly not a clan) and of no military significance.

The Gunns, in essence, took no part in support of the Jacobite rebellions and the main MacHamish Gunn quite logically supported the Government of the time.

And was the Jacobite rebellion all that the movies have made it to be? Another view is that *'Jacobitism was right-wing, backward-looking, intellectually regressive, morally bankrupt and financed by foreign tyrants. The much-romaticized Jacobite rebellions ... were essentially attempted right-wing* coups d'etat.*'*[1030]

[1026] Page 82 and 223 of Livingstone, A. of Bachuil, Aikman, C.W.H. and Hart, B.S, *No Quarter Given The Muster Roll of Price Charles Edwatd Stuart's Army 1745-1746*. Mark Rugg Gunn page 192 quotes 'Gentleman's Magazine' of 1746 saying that Prince Charlie, at Culloden Moor, *'had a few of the Clan of Gunns'* but with the proviso that the Earl of Loudon – for the Hanovers - had among his men *'120 Gunns under their chief MacKemish'*. I have read the Gentleman's magazines for that year and can find no such reference bar for one just on the Earl of Loudon which had no Gunn link. This makes me question Mark Rugg Gunn's entry. As well, the extremely unlikely nature of one hundred and twenty Gunns being led by a Killernan when we have no record of any Killernan doing that at any time makes the account more questionable especially as the 1748 memorial has no record for the Gunns having any military strength – or even existence – as a clan.

[1027] Page 217, Celeste Ray, *Highland Heritage.*

[1028] Page 293, Col. David Stewart, *Sketches of the Highlanders of Scotland Volume Two.*

[1029] Page 26, Col. David Stewart, *Sketches of the Highlanders of Scotland.*

[1030] Page 107, George Rosie, *Curious Scotland Tales From a Hidden History.*

14.4 The Clearances

There is no doubt that some Highland estates were "cleared" of tenants and their subsistence crofts or tenanted small-holdings, usually to provide room for sheep grazing and/or deer-shooting. This is still keenly felt in many areas of the Highlands. It also resonates with the Scottish Diaspora overseas, even against evidence to the contrary. It is not unusual to meet descendants of émigré Scots who, their descendants claim, were "forced out of Scotland". This is often given an overlay of religious persecution, class warfare, unjust criminal sentences and so on, and an image is conjured up of entire crofting communities being herded onto boats for exportation to the Colonies … and no evidence to the contrary will change the mind of the convinced..... *Dr Bruce Durie*[1031]

If you go the bother of actually reading up about the Highland Clearances, not in rubbish like John Prebble's book[1032] *and similar, but in the scholarly literature, the real picture is revealed as being far from the popular myth of tens of thousands of persecuted Highlanders who had their houses brutally torched and who were then forced to flee to Canada, Australia and elsewhere.*[1033]

The popular view tends to be grossly over-simplified and, at worst, becomes caricature…[1034]

The Highland Clearances of 1790-1855 have been extremely well covered by historians over many years and those wishing for the full detail should explore their texts. Simplistically the key question is; was it 'ethnic cleansing' or had the process merely suffered from a bad press?[1035] Or was it something in between? As far as it impacted on the Gunns – and it was a wide process involving much more[1036] than just Gunn lands – I think it is best viewed as forceful / violent, Victorian, well-meaning paternalism with appalling consequences for many. Yes, serious mistakes were made in the actual process; for example the Kildonan riots[1037] of 1813 were caused by too hastily requiring people to move[1038] - although at least one suggestion for the reluctance of the Kildonan people to move *'was attributed to their whisky smuggling activities which were sure to be restricted'*[1039] when they settled elsewhere - but this haste was not deliberate policy, more inexperience. The point is clear; the people

[1031] http://www.bletherskite.net/2013/10/04/what-is-a-clan-by-dr-bruce-durie/#comment-21492 accessed 1 May 2014.

[1032] John Prebble's *The Highland Clearanaces* is a readable, emotional, one-sided, populist account of the period. The front cover of the Penguin 1985 (and earlier) issue highlights the 'ethnic cleansing' aspect of his account. The emotionality of the Strathnaver clearances in fiction is explored in Laurence Gourievidis 'The Strathnaver Clearances in Modern Scottish Fiction: History, Literary Perception & Memory' in J. R. Baldwon's *The Province of Strathnaver*.

[1033] https://roddymacleod.wordpress.com/2012/01/10/perpetuating-some-myths-of-the-highland-clearances/ accessed 2 October 2018.

[1034] Page 5, David Forbes *The Sutherland Clearances 1806-1820; An Introduction.*

[1035] The bad press is practically created by the title given to this period, namely 'Highland Clearances' or 'Clearances'. The Clearances were only one part of that which went on. If the period was known as the 'Resettlement Period' then attitudes to the time might be considerably less emotional. Donald Sage's Chaper 16 *Memorabilia Domestica* is an example of the emotional press for the 1819 clearance. For great emotional journalism covering the Gordons and the Clearances see the chapter called 'The Gordons' in *Our Scots Noble Families* by Tom Johnston CH FRSE; the book's title is pure sarcasm. I do not deny problems and mistakes were made in the Sutherland Clearances but what was done was legal and with concern for the tenants.

[1036] Pages 67-85, Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances.*

[1037] James Hunter's *Set Adrift Upon the World; The Sutherland Clearances*, chapter 3 has a very readable account of the Kildonan uprising / riot and the text provides a careful account showing the actuality of the Sutherland Clearances, including placing the violence / forcefulness in perpective.

[1038] Page lviii, R. J. Adam, *Sutherland Estate Documents Volume 1*.

[1039] Page 56, Christine Lodge, *The Clearances and the Cleared; Women, Economy and Land in the Scottish Highlands 1800-1900,* being a Doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, December 1999.

did not want to move but the land was not theirs. Violence was certainly used, but *'The level of violence was less than in similar events in contemporary Ireland*.'[1040]

Why did the Sutherland Estate get involved with Clearances? '*Two ideas loomed large in the thinking of the Sutherland estate… The first was the growing conviction that the estate… was capable of spectacular economic advance … The second…was about the poverty of of the common people… A fundamental rearrangement of the foundations of their lives was imperative.'*[1041] In other words, sheep would pay more and allow for improvements on the Estate a lot of which would be for the good of the *'common people'*. Yes, the policy underpinning the Sutherland Estate clearances had as one of its two key points spending money to remove poverty. There may also have been antipathy to those on the Estate due to the poor response to raising the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders / Regiment of Foot in 1799 which basically came from the old 'Fencible' regiments (home defence forces).[1042] Twenty-five 'Gunn of Kildonan' enrolled in the regiment of 365 at the time it was first raised. Enrolments, in order, were Mackay 91, Sutherland 60, Macdonald 27, Murray 26, Gunn of Kildonan 25, Macleod of Assynt 25, Ross 19, Grant 17, Gordon 15 Matheson 15, Fraser 14, Macpherson 12 Mackenzie of Assynt 10 and Munro 9.[1043]

Now what did this mean in practice on the Sutherland Estate around 1820?[1044] The points and some of the language are from Factor Francis Suther's letter to the Editor of 'The Scotsman' 13 August 1819 and from George Gunn's (13,60) letter[1045] of 21 July 1819 responding to 'The Scotsman' of 10 July 1819. -

- The Sutherland Estate tenants had notice in November 1817 that they would be removed starting 1 May 1819. The last year was rent free and arrears of rent were ignored.
- This information was regularly repeated including by local Ministers and personal communication.
- Tenants were offered lots at Helmsdale in replacement of between one or two Scots acres, or at Brora with lots of two acres with land already ploughed and ready for cultivation. Coastal allotments for the first year were rent free. They could, therefore, live in the old houses whilst building the new.
- For those who thought such land too small six to twelve acres were offered on Dornoch Moors and Five Pounds given for every acre brought into cultivation.
- Timber was furnished for the new houses free of charge.
- With regard to the burning of the houses *'The account of their being burnt out of their huts is equally untrue, in those instances indeed where the tenant either did not, or from the distant situation*

[1040] Page 404, Eric Richards *The Highland Clearances.* Like many other estates the MacDonald Estates of North Uist also had 'evictions' in 1849; it also had bad publicity for what was basically the normal clearance issue – the land was not capable of supporting the increased number of tenants (not least due to the potato blight of 1847) who were three years behind in rent. The Estate offered to discharge all overdue rent, allow the tenants to sell all their own property and be moved to Canada at the Estate's cost with the Estate providing extra food, clothing and extra supplies for the journey, and work was available on arrival in Canada. But this 'eviction' caused massive dissatisfaction which required police action to control. It's the same problem as with the Sutherland Estate, but on a smaller scale – people were not coping but initially refused change on principle. See Patrick Cooper *The So-Called Evictions From the MacDonald Estates in the Island of North Uist, Outer Hebrides 1849*.
[1041] Pages 156-157, Eric Richards *The Highland Clearances*.
[1042] Page 171, Robert Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero; The Image of the Highlander 1745-1830.*
[1043] From an information board at Stirling Castle, July 2024.
[1044] Sutherland Estate papers, National Library of Scotland especially 'Extracts from letters received by Mr Sutherland from persons resident in the North respecting the practice of "Burning out the Tenants on the Estate of Sutherland". They were in a letter addressed to J. Lock / Loch Esq, posted 18 July 1819 to J. Lock in Bloomsbury, London.
[1045] George Gunn's letters are easy to read and detailed – an interesting social history of the Estate could be created from them.

of his hut, could not carry away the timber, it was burnt, but not until after valuation of two sworn appraisers, in order to prevent them being reoccupied ...'

- These arrangements went on from 1807 until at least 1820+?
- *'It has been a rule upon this, as it is upon other Estates in the Country, to remove from their holdings all Offenders against the Law, upon their being convicted of Sheep stealing, Illegal Distillation, Destroying the woods, Killing the Fish in close time, or of any other depredation on the property of the Landlord or tacksman ... This rule was not abandoned on the present occasion, and persons actually convicted of these crimes before a Magistrate, amounting in number to about one hundred, one half of whom were also heads of Families were not to be retained upon the estate.'* [1046]
- Very few actually emigrated to America (20 to 25 families) in response to the evictions.[1047]
- *'Before 1815 no herrings* (were) *caught; 1816 4000 barrels caught. By 1818 herring was worth more than the sum total of all rentals in the Estate'* (£30,000 for the herrings)
- *'there was not a House in which the least symptom of sickness appeared but was left undisturbed and the inhabitants allowed to remain in quiet possession where many of them still are.'*
- '*if the people will throw off their former idle unindustrious habits they will earn a sufficient daily competency to keep themselves... it was certainly as necessary for the Proprietor to rid his Glens of this tenantry who required to be fed ... the indolence and unprofitable of the tenantry ... All this natural riches* (of the sea) *so beautifully offered were lost. And why? Because the people who ought to have been employed in the Fisheries occupied their time in preventing the useful application of the interior* ... (those who don't live on the coast lived in) *filth, idleness, precarious food and clothing and all the train of ruinous consequences on health and morals ....*

Okay, it's patronising 'the estate knows best' and 'don't be a nuisance in any way or the estate will not give you anything' – but it's not ethnic cleansing. Contemplate the Clearances in a modern way. Imagine you rented a property and the owner said you can have the current place rent free for a year and then the owner will have organised a new place for you to live a little way from where you currently live and you can have the first year rent free there as well. That just doesn't happen – it sounds incredibly generous. But that is basically what the Sutherland Estate offered. It's worth noting that in the thirty years after 1817 – after the Clearances – there was only one period of famine in 1836-7 whereas famine had been acute before 1817.[1048] So, one may not like the policy but it better served those on the total estate, including those relocated from inland areas to places like Helmsdale.

So, Gunns certainly were moved around by the Clearances and some suffering happened in consequence. Migration? Sure, some happened, but migration started a long time before the Clearances - one estimate suggests Scottish migration of between 85,000 and 115,000 between the 1600-1650.[1049]

What the Sutherland Estate did was legal and evokes modern planning,[1050] the actions were no worse than that done elsewhere and was done with an awareness of the need to improve the lives of the

[1046] Sutherland Estate papers, National Library of Scotland, especially 'Extracts from letters received by Mr Sutherland from persons resident in the North respecting the practice of "Burning out the Tenants on the Esate of Sutherland". They were in a letter addressed to J. Lock / Loch Esq, posted 18 July 1819 in Bloomsbury, London.
[1047] This is supported elsewhere; Page 36 David Forbes *The Sutherland Clearances 1806-1820; An Introduction* points out that only 83 people emigrated in 1819 whereas 2,304 were resettled on the Sutherland Estate and 889 settled elsewhere in Sutherland.
[1048] Page 24, David Forbes, *The Sutherland Clearances 1806-1820; An Introduction.*
[1049] Page 5, T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire 1600-1815* Penguin, 2004.

people on their estate. It wasn't perfect. Mark Rugg Gunn's view[1051] that *'the wholesale Sutherland clearances, a chapter of tragedy and inhumanity as black as any in Scottish history and nowhere did the axe fall more heavily than on the land of the Gunns'* is not sustainable. By contrast James Hunter writes *'The Sutherland clearances, according to their originators, enabled entire communities to move from the country's interior, where living conditions were allegedly poor, to seaside locations offering more in the way of opportunity.'*[1052] Another view is simple – *'The Policy and plans put into effect in Sutherland ...were very much in the spirit of the age.'*[1053]

And was it all as efficient / ruthless as many say? One view is *'the obstinate people of the Heights of Kildonan ... rapidly rebuilt their huts from their old timber. Reed said they simply drove their cattle out of sight when the clearing parties approached and then returned the stock to their old pastures when the constables departed.'*[1054]

One has to mention the Factor of the Sutherland Estate at one time in the Clearances was George Gunn (13,60), who was 'Chief of the Clan Gunn' in some views; Gunn certainly *'rearranged groups of tenantry in Kildonan and Loth at Rovie and Craigton'*.[1055] So, no matter your view of the Clearances the Gunn hierarchy was certainly partly responsible for it. Incidentally George Gunn (13,60) was loathed by the earlier Factor, Patrick Sellar the details of which are explored in Eric Richards *Patrick Sellar and the Highland Clearances*.

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[1050] *'the Marquis of Stafford and his wife had been responsible for the kind of approach which foreshadowed modern regional planning'.* Page 39, David Forbes *The Sutherland Clearances 1806-20; An Introduction.*
[1051] Page 211. T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire 1600-1815.*
[1052] Page 260, James Hunter *Last of the Free.*
[1053] Pages 8-9, David Forbes, *The Sutherland Clearances 1806-1820; An Introduction.*
[1054] Page 240, Eric Richards *Patrick Sellar and the Highland Clearances.*
[1055] Page 269, Eric Richards *Patrick Sellar and the Highland Clearances.*

One view of the Gunns around this time –

Clan Gunn

This clan ... (lived) *in a most remote and inaccessible country, they continued to live in the committal of continued breaches of the law and yet to escape punishment. This character, even to a late day, distinguished in a remarkable manner, some individuals of this Clan and district, and the people of the heights of Kildonan were long noted for being the least observant of the laws of any in the county. Indeed it is only within the last five years that the disappearance of a sherriff's officer, who was sent up to execute a warrant in a civil process, led to the recollection of many stories of former days. Their country was peculiarly favourable for carrying on illegal distillation, and they did not neglect to take advantage of their situation. They obtained, with much ease, their grain from the corn districts of the adjoining county of Caithness, and the inaccessible and remote situations of their habitations, made it neither very easy nor advisable, for the revenue officers to follow them into their recesses. The nature of their country gave them equal facilities in disposing of their whiskey....*

Being from pages 97-99 of *An account of the improvements on the estates of the Marquess of Stafford in the Counties of Stafford and Salop and on the Estate of Sutherland with Remarks* by James Loch Esquire, London, Longman, Hurst Rees, Orme and Brown, 1820. James Loch had been the Factor on the Sutherland Estate.

14.5 Emigration

Emigration could be either an escape route for the poor and persecuted or an avenue of advancement for the ambitious and adventurous. Often it was both.[1056]

as many Lowlanders as Highlanders emigrated between 1763 and 1765[1057]

The Highland Famine of 1846-1855 was significantly caused by the failure of the main subsistence crop, the potato. This famine does not stand any comparison with the Great Irish Famine but is of importance. One view of the impact of the Famine on Sutherland is *'Sutherland had a distinctive population history… Only three Parishes Assynt, Loth and Lairg, show exceptional losses for the famine period. The rest of estimated out-migration for the county as a whole was much higher between 1831 and 1841 than in either of the famine decades. The emigration history of Sutherland was plainly primarily determined by the great clearances …'*[1058] So, we have famine and the Clearances helping cause migration. As well the Duke of Sutherland supported many to emigrate to British North America in the period 1847-1851.[1059] But there were also positive reasons for migration such as the discovery of gold in Australia.[1060]

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So what was it like to migrate to places like Canada and Australia around this time? The following[1061] was written by John Gunn (14) 1836-1854, son of Barbara Gunn (13,55), describing his trip to Australia in 1853. These are my relatives.

from Caithness

Monday July 11th Took steamer from Scrabster Roads to Glasgow and arrived there on Wednesday the 13th about 7 in the afternoon. I remained in Glasgow till 6 o'clock P.M. on Saturday when I took a steamer to Liverpool and arrived there about 8 o'clock P.M. on Sunday. Remained on shore until Thursday following when I embarked on Board the ship Tasmania which was then hauled out of the Docks and lying in the River Mersey. The ship lay here again until Wednesday the 27th July when she weighed anchor and was tugged out of the Harbour by two steam boats the last of which left the following morning at Holy-Head when we were left to beat up the English Channell - it was a fine day + we were in high spirits. On the 29th it commenced to blow right ahead and a great many of the Passengers sea sick I myself was very sick for some days. For the four following days we were beating up the English channel the wind always blowing ahead until on Tuesday the 2nd Augt when we neared the Bay of Biscay and it fell calm and continued so all day but on the 3rd a smart breeze sprung up which carried us along at a beautiful rate and from this to the 9th we had splendid weather and all

[1056] Page 32, Marjory Harper *Adventurers & Exiles.*
[1057] Page 43, Celeste Ray, *Highland Heritage.*
[1058] Page 76, T. M. Devine, *The Great Highland Famine.*
[1059] Page 206 T. M. Devine, *ibid.*
[1060] Emigration from all Scottish ports to Australia was 541 in 1852 – and 5450 the following year. Page 205 T. M. Devine, *ibid.*
[1061] I have similar accounts for my family Gunn members going to Canada in the 1840s.

passengers were again well. there are a great many Highland people on Board and we had Music and Dancing every good evening in which I joined considering it best for the health to take a little exercise. On Tuesday the 9th the wind shifted a little ahead of us. Today we saw the Island of Porto Santo which belongs to the Portuguese. It is a wild (mild?) looking spot we saw two small boats as if they were fishing between us and the shore. 10th and 11th Very calm and doing little progress. On the 12 we came in sight of the Island of Medeira and passed about 8 miles to the east of it. 13 we had little wind but on Sunday the 14th we had a .... breeze. There were a great many fishes seen today and although it was Sunday the sailors and Passengers some of which I am sorry to say were Scotch tried with hook and spear to catch some. They did catch five of them and immediately gutted and Boiled and ate them. They were called Albacors and weighed about 30lbs each. However I did not touch them. On Monday the 15th we had a nice Breeze of Fair Wind nothing between 9 and 10 knots an hour. Passed the barque Jane of Aberdeen bound for Melbourne in Lat 31 N. On 16th the splendid screw steam ship Sidney passed us. She sailed from London on the 4th Augt and was bound for Sidney and passed steaming under a cloud of Canvas about 3 O'Clock in the afternoon. On Wednesday the 17th we entered the Tropics about 11 O'Clock am. It is now getting very warm. 17th and 18th. Good Breeze of fair wind several ships in Company but we left them all in a short time. 19th. Very Calm and at night it was the most beautiful sight I ever saw there was several ships in view and the sea was as smooth as glass. Saturday the 20th. Steward was today put in irons in consequence of his refusing to execute certain orders of the Commander. On the 21st, 22nd + 23rd we had fair wind and going very well. On the 24th it rained heavily for the first time since we left Liverpool and the passengers were eagerly engaged in catching as much of it as they could for washing with it. A child died today of the measles and committed to a watery grave about 4 O'Clock in the afternoon by the Carpenter after a funeral sermon was read by the surgeon. Immediately afterwards the passengers sang a hymn. On the 25th it was very blowy with some flashes of Lightning in the evening. It is now very warm + I can scarcely sleep in my berth with my clothes at all on me. We walk the Deck with nothing but our trowsers and shirt on and still it is very oppressing the heat. I can scarcely bear to put my naked hand on any article exposed to the sun about 12 noon. The sun is now over our heads. Friday the 26th. Very calm with some showers of rain. 27th High winds not at all favourable. On the 28th, 29th, 30th we had very good weather but the heat very great and suffering a great deal from thirst the water very bad and not drinkable without vinegar or something to take away the taste and smell. We are all divided in 6 messes + take a day about in cleaning the berths and cooking for each mess. On Wednesday the 31st we were all ordered by the Captain on Deck from 10 to 12 noon to allow the 'tween Decks' to be aired. 1st 2nd + 3rd very varyarorable (?) weather but on the 4th we fell in with the Trade winds which are favorable. Monday 5th September. Splendid breeze going 10 + eleven knots an hour. Tuesday 6th. Blowing very strong but wind very favorable going at the rate of 14 Knots an hour and continued this way for some days but on the 12th we were oblged to go under double reefed top sails. I should have observed that that we crossed the line on the 3rd and the event was celebrated by the usual custom of shaving among the crew and passengers. 13th 14th and 15th Weather milder though the swell of the sea and the rocking of the ship made it almost impossible to walk the Decks. 16th Good weather and going well the weather is now getting colder. 17th Still good weather. 18th It commenced to blow against us and continued so for two days a tremendous quantity of sea fowl observed such as Cape Pidgeons and Albatrosses some of the latter measure from wing to wing the length of from 8 to ten feet. On the 20th we passed the Cape of Good Hope at a distance of 800 miles from it to the south. From this to the 1st

of October we have very changeable and rough weather which made it very difficult to write. On the 2nd October the wind changed in our favour and we run by log the great distance of 340 miles in 24 hours but shipped several seas which washed all the decks. 3rd + 4th Very heavy sea with strong wind. Lost our main top stansail. Wednesday 5th Our our miser (?) top Gallant yard gave way and broke through the middle. The carpenters were immediately engaged in making a new one and were helped by some Carpenters and Joiners on Board. Thursday 6th Heavy sea, ship labouring much shipping heavy seas. We got our yard rigged early in the morning but about 12 noon a sea struck the ship lurching her in such a manner as to break her miser mast into three pieces + Down came itself yards and sails bringing down with it in its course our Maintop gallant and Royal yards. Nothing could exceed our Consternation + surprise when we saw our ship so suddenly disabled. All hands were immediately engaged in clearing the deck and the carpenters got such help from the Passengers that the ship was soon put to rights. 7th 8 9 + 10th Got fair wind and going very well 11th Blowing rather strong. 12th Saw a ship bound to Melbourne with Passengers 115 days out we soon left sight of her she sailed from London. 13th and 14th Fair wind + going well. 15th Passengers today collected a subscription among them for to present the Captain on their arrival at Melbourne with some token of their respect. 16th Wind rather contrary but still on the right course. 17th + 18th Fair wind. 19 + 20 Fair wind and drawing near land. 21st This morning early the ....(?) was that the land was in sight and everybody was on Deck. 22nd Coasting along the Australian shore. 23rd Early this morning came in sight of Port Phillip Light House. We then got a Pilot and sailed up the straits for Melbourne where we arrived and cast Anchor three miles from the town at 2 O'Clock in the afternoon. The Custom House Officers came immediately on Board with the Inspector. We lay at Anchor here all night and next morning and this morning Tuesday the 25th. There was steam boats come to fetch us ashore. Melbourne is a strange Place. Two men was hanged yesterday and other two are to be hanged today. Wages is very good yet. I did not get any job yet but I expect to get one soon. This is now a sketch of the Passage and I hasten to inform you of my safe arrival Dear Uncle. There was no sickness on Board but 7 children died of the measles +c and we had three Births. We arrived 2 hours after the Gildfinder (?) who sailed from Liverpool 5 days before us. Mc Williamson's (?) little Neil died also on the voyage. I will write you again soon with all the news.

I am My Dear Uncle
your affect nephew
John Gunn 25th Oct 1853

I was not a day sick since I left home but a little sea sick at first. Passage 88 days.

John (14) died 10 January 1854 at about the same time his brother Donald Gunn (14) arrived in Australia; sunstroke is possible.

14.6 Gunn tartan

It was (Sir Walter) *Scott who, to add "aboriginal" colour to George IV's "jaunt" to Edinburgh in 1822, invented the cult of the clan tartan … arguably one of his finer works of fiction.*[1062]

'the tartan mania is not a disease which has grown less virulent over the years.'[1063]

'Originally tartan designs had no (Clan) *names and no symbolic meaning …'.*[1064]

Following … 1822 … Gunn … selected pattern sett variations of the Green Mackay tartan…[1065]

One can see how tartan of an area would occur – a person would dye wool using the plants of the district. But that district / regional tartan wasn't named after a family. The word 'tartan' derives from the Celtic *tuar* (colour) and *tan* (district)[1066] again showing it was cloth of an area, not of a family. So, what happened? *'In 1842 Queen Victoria and Prince Albert visited Scotland. The young couple fell in love with the country, and tartan, which had been simmering for 20 years since the visit of King George IV, bubbled up again…. The brothers John and Charles Allen, calling themselves Sobieski Stuart,*[1067] *finally published* Vestiarium Scoticum*, (but which was based on drafts from the late 1820s on) which introduced 75 new tartans to the delight of the trade.'*[1068]

Consider the *Verstiarium Scoticum.* The book's authors presented the text *'as historical proof of the connections between tartans and family clans, a link that previously had no record. The Stuarts' claims were later found to be completely false; the tartans in the book were in fact designed by the brothers themselves. Even still, their fabrications are to this day widely accepted as authentic by manufacturers and families alike'*.[1069] So, a whole pile of named family tartans were invented for the *Verstiarium Scoticum* and given a fictional history so tourists would buy them. And Gunn tartan is in the book.[1070] Now there is a chance that this Gunn tartan reflected earlier tartan worn by Gunns and others near them – that chance offers one reason why Mackay, Gunn, MacWilliam and Morrison tartans look so similar.[1071] But named Gunn tartan is nothing more than a Victorian invention to get money from historically confused tourists and which continues to do so. As I have said before so much Gunn history is really mythology and named Gunn tartan is part of that mythology.

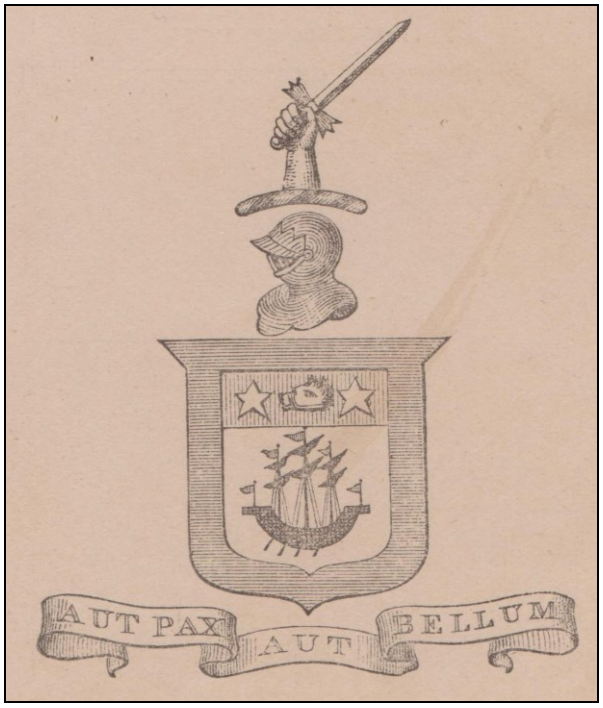
[1062] http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article1039746.ece accessed 15 July 2018.
[1063] p. 167, Michael Brander, *The Making of the Highlands*.
[1064] http://scottishtartans.org/downloads/fact_sheet_tartan.pdf accessed 15 July 2017.
[1065] Page 8, A. W. Morrison, *The Genealogy of the Morrison Origins in Scotland.*
[1066] Page 19, Ronald William *The Lords of the Isles*.
[1067] They also claimed to be the grandsons of Prince Charles Edward Stuart – 'Bonnie Prince Charlie'. See page 146, Robert Clyde *From Rebel to Hero: The Image of the Highlander*.
[1068] http://www.tartansauthority.com/research/researchers/james-grant/ accessed 15 July 2017. For the evolution of the Gunn tartan from this time see https://www.academia.edu/43976793/CLAN_GUNN_TARTANS_A_history_of_the_tartans_associated_with_the_Clan_Gunn_their_antiquity_origins_and_mentions_in_records?rhid=28822925838&swp=rr-rw-wc-114300651
[1069] http://www.brooklynrail.org/2012/06/art_books/vestiarium-scoticum accessed 16 July 2017. The willingness to believe that which was not historically accurate had earlier (and later) examples; James Macpherson in the mid 1700s invented the third century Scottish bard Ossian and 'discovered' his poems - Scotland and Europe completely accepted them for many years.
[1070] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Tartans_from_the_Vestiarium_Scoticum accessed 16 July 2018. And is described on page 88 of the original book. It makes reference to Gunns as Ghuine which gets back to the origin of the Gunns, see chapter 1.4.
[1071] http://www.tartansauthority.com/resources/archives/the-archives/scobie/territorial-tartans/ accessed 21 July 2017.

14.7 The fictional, traditional Gunn Crest badge and motto

The Lord Lyon …denies the existence of a 'clan crest' or a 'clan coat of arms'. These belong to the chief alone; a clansperson may wear the crest badge only if it is encircled by a belt and buckle'[1072]

'Crest badges, much like clan tartans, do not have a long history, and owe much to Victorian era romanticism...'[1073]

James Logan, in 1831, does not list a Clan badge for the Gunns.[1074]



From the title page of Thomas Sinclair's The Gunns*. It seems to have part of the Gun Munro of Braemore coat of arms.*

Historically the Gunns never had arms issued for a Chief by Lord Lyon, in other words there were never any legally approved shield of arms or crest of the Chief. That's because there is no such thing as a Clan coat of arms[1075] – it all belongs to the Chief and should only be used with his / her permission. But historically people have (wrongly) used two different versions of a shield of arms / crest badge for Gunns.

[1072] Page 40, Celeste Ray, *Highland Heritage.*
[1073] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scottish_crest_badge accessed 15 April 2013.
[1074] Pages 300-301, James Logan, *The Scottish Gael Volume 1.*
[1075] *'A clan cannot have a coat of arms.'* The Court of the Lord Lyon. http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/255.html accessed 17 July 2018.

These inventions are firstly a badge shape with the clenched fist with *'Aut Pax Aut Bellum'*; the earliest known version of this Gunn badge and motto is to be found engraved on a tea service once owned by Elizabeth Countess of Sutherland 1765-1839 but presented by her to Factor George Gunn (13,60) in 1832. The inscription on it does not say he was Chief of the 'Clan' Gunn. For more information about the Countess of Sutherland's creation of a 'Gunn Chief' see Appendix 3. Its use on the tea service was a piece of imagination; its later use as a 'Clan Gunn' crest badge is unauthorised and wrong.

Secondly the arms for Gunn Munro of Braemore includes, at top, an upraised sword in a clenched fist; this may be the origin of the non-legal Clan Gunn crest badge. I have been reliably informed that *'a quartered coat of arms was matriculated in name of George Gun Munro of Braemore on 18 November 1800 wherein he is recorded as 'the heir and Representative of the late Sir George Munro of Poyntzfield his Uncle' ... the shield of arms shown on the website*[1076] *you mention is a reasonably accurate representation of the Arms for Gun that appear in the second quarter of the Arms for George Gun Munro of Braemore.'*

So, without any Gunn chief there were no traditional coat of arms or motto for the Gunns. What has been used are either illegal borrowings or pure fictional arms / motto.

[1076] http://www.thetreemaker.com/family-coat-g/gunn/scotland.html shows the probable shield of arms for George Gunn Munro / Gun Munro of Braemore. Search for Gunn.

14.8 Septs

(Septs) *must be regarded as a rather wonderful effort of imagination …*
The very word 'sept' is delusive[1077]

It should also be said that the various Sept lists, which are published in the various Clans and Tartan books, have no official authority. They merely represent some person's, (usually in the Victorian era) views of which name groups were in a particular clan's territory.[1078]

Given Gunns are a non-related group of original settlers who never even had a Chief let alone a founding father, Gunn septs are impossible as septs spring from founding fathers and Chiefs.

Tradional Gunn myth supporters like to have septs. The problem for these supporters is all the supposed Septs derive from Coroner Gunn. This adds support for the non-existence of mythic Gunn Chiefs before the Coroner as it shows lack of evidence for earlier Gunn 'Chiefs' from whom Septs should have originated.

Yes, Coroner Gunn had children and a range of surnames may descend from them. But even having a surname linked to Gunn does not mean that you are of Gunn descent; various surnames have many origins. Consider the name Wilson, a name associated with Gunns but also Clan Innes, Ireland and elsewhere. Just because you have a name which is on one of the many varied - and often imaginative - Gunn sept names list does not mean you have any Gunn link whatsoever.

The question for people interested in Gunn septs is simple – are you *sure* you are related to one of these Coroner Gunn lines? I would be very impressed if you could prove it. And if it's not factually able to be proved then your surname could descend from anywhere. If you cannot absolutely prove your descent from one of Coroner Gunn's children why are you bothered with Gunn septs?

[1077] Page 295 F. Adams, revised Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, *The Clans Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands.*
[1078] From 'Clans, Families and Septs' by Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw Bt.
http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/clans_families_septs.htm accessed 26 March 2013.

15. Conclusion

Real Gunn history is simple.

The Gunns are best viewed as being very early settlers of northern mainland Scotland; Gunn is a regional / area surname. Gunns were not related as a tribe, but obviously family groups existed. There is not the slightest shred of evidence to support any Orkney Islands / Norway Gunn 'Chief' origin.

The Gunns are not a clan on any historic or academic basis as clans require a founding father and Gunns do not have such a person. There is not the slightest academic evidence to support any 'Gunn Chief' until one was found for the Countess of Sutherland[1079] in the early 1800s.

The first Gunn known to history was Coroner Gunn of Caithness, he was killed around 1450. He had children. His main two sons had families from which we have the MacHamish Gunn family and the MacRob Gunn family, both with living descendants. These families, over time, fulfilled minor roles in history. Ancient Gunn history – pre-historical sources if you like - finished with Coroner Gunn as from his time historical sources progressively exist.

After Coroner Gunn, especially as the years roll on, modern Gunn history is nothing more than assorted family histories and these family stories can be found in various texts. These events involving Gunns *might* show what applied to other Gunns - for example in the Highland Clearances or emigration – but no assumption that the Gunn in any account relates to any reader is valid. After all, although Scottish Gunns share a surname they do not axiomatically share close relationships. A reader may know - and have provable - family trees which shows a person in history to be a relative, but that is another matter…

There is little (if anything) uniquely Gunn as we are all created / modified by our upbringing / nationalities and various cultures / religions through which we and earlier generations have moved. The further generations move on from a Scottish past, the more social / cultural leftovers from that time will have dissipated - but what our ancestors experienced is of historic importance as are real genealogical links.

[1079] The Countess Sutherland demanded a Clan Gunn Chief be found so an 'inquisition' was held (as she was so important) in 1803 – the legal basis of which is unclear. A 'Chief' was found but the male line died out. See Appendices 1 and 2.

Brawlbin farm 2011. See Appendices 1 and 2.

Osclay 2011. See Appendices 1 and 2.

Appendices

1. The ongoing Clan Gunn Chief line, established 1803

it must be fully accepted, on the legal and state evidence now produced, that (13,47) *George Gunn, factor, Rhives, was the true representative of the M'Hamishes of Kildonan…*[1080]
(and, therefore, Chief of the Clan Gunn)

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Summary

1. The Gunns were not by origin a clan so did not have a Clan Gunn Chief until 1803. See Chapter 4 for what happened.
2. In 1803 the Scottish Court of Session – the supreme civil court of Scotland – made a decision which meant that Hector Gunn was the Chief of the Clan Gunn, so establishing the legal Clan Gunn Chief line and by implication from that time the Gunns were a Clan. The title of Chief was also then awarded backwards to earlier generations with questionable accuracy. Co-incidentally this line was descended from Margaret Gunn, daughter of Chief Donald Crotach Gunn although that descent was not considered in 1803. See pages 152–157 and pages 297-298.
3. This meant the definite, legal Clan Gunn Chief line went Chief Hector Gunn (died 1803), who was followed by his son Chief George Gunn (Rhives, 1787- 1859), who was followed by his elder son Chief Donald Gunn (c. 1828 – 1863) who was followed by his younger brother Chief Hector Gunn[1081] (1830 -1874).
4. The preceding family died out of male Gunns in 1874.
5. This left the Clan Gunn Chief position open, not least as to be Chief one's family had to have followed certain rules. These include one's family always having the surname Gunn, being legally married if one's children are to inherit the title, one's family never having held nationalities which did not have the British Royal family as ruler (there is an exemption here for some Americans after a certain year) and so on.
6. Lord Lyon created a 'Chief' Iain Gunn of the Clan Gunn in 2016 based on the wrong idea that all descendants from the earlier Chiefs of the Clan had died out. There are also questions as to whether the meeting called to decide Clan Gunn Chief followed the publicly stated due process of the Lord Lyon court. See Appendix 2.
7. It is questionable whether Lord Lyon has the right to determine who is Chief of a Clan. The Court of Session in 1938 ruled he did not – and that court is the supreme civil court of Scotland and therefore outranks Lord Lyon.

[1080] Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*, pages 174-175
[1081] Chief Hector's youngest sister was Elizabeth Sutherland Gunn, born 1835. She disappears from the records in 1861. She may have died unmarried and so may have been (due to Lord Lyon Blair's 2007 view that the Gunn Chief line could flow through the female Gunn line but she would have to marry a Gunn for the surname to continue down her generations) the fifth Clan Gunn Chief if she was alive in 1874 after her brother Chief Hector Gunn died.

8. The descendants from the earlier Clan Gunn Chiefs have not died out. Descendants from Alexander Dalnaglaton Gunn 1752 – 1820 exist. He was the younger brother of George Gunn from whom came the first legal Clan Gunn Chiefs. As already said the College of Arms in London has ruled that I am legally descended from Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton – but that only applies to England, Wales and parts of the British Empire. Scottish Law is independent from the Act of Union.

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In detail

Before the 1800s the most significant Gunns were the Gunns of Killernan. This was due to that family's descent from the first Gunn known to history, namely Coroner Gunn[1082] of Caithness who died around 1452 and whose social and professional position was of real significance.[1083]

The Gunns became a 'modern Clan' with a legally established Chief in the early 1803 in that a Chief of the Clan Gunn was by implication established by the Court of Session in Edinburgh. From that time the 'Chief' title was retrospectively[1084] awarded to the earlier Heads of the Gunns of Killernan, not always accurately.

Part 1 – the 1803 inquisition

This significant change of the Gunns becoming a modern Clan was due to the powerful and immensely wealthy landowner the Duchess-Countess of Sutherland.[1085] In 1800 she '*informed the Reverend Alexander Sage*[1086] *of her desire to know who was the chief*[1087] *of the Clan Gunn ... This wish of the Duchess-Countess put the whole Clan in commotion. There was no universally recognised chief'.*[1088]

There was one main reason for there being '*no universally recognised chief'.* The person who had been Chief (and the term is now being used in its modern, retrospectively awarded sense) was (11) Chief William Gunn who had died in India in 1780, his younger brother (11) Morrison having predeceased him.[1089] They both died without issue. Their father was (10,19) Chief Alexander Gunn of Badanloch and Wester Helmsdale. His father was (9,15) Chief Donald Crotach Gunn. With the death of (11) Chief William Gunn the direct, senior male of the Clan Gunn line died out without an obvious successor.

[1082] He is often wrongly called Crowner Gunn.
[1083] See Chapter 8.
[1084] Sutherland Estate documents have no mention of the 'Clan Gunn Chief' even when such documents were written by one of those who were later awarded the title of Chief and where it would have been advantageous for him to use the term. See pages 134-146.
[1085] Page 155, Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances - 'the Duchess / Countess represented wealth and power in its most conspicuous form.'*
[1086] The Rev. Sage was an extremely well-known expert on Gunn matters.
[1087] Her use of the term 'Chief' placed it into mainstream usage.
[1088] Pages 206-207, Mark Rugg Gunn, *Clan Gunn*. Books such as Jean MacDougall *Highland Postbag The Correspondence of Four MacDougall Chiefs 1715-1865* clearly show how Scottish Chiefs were well known and accepted from time immemorial – the Gunn contrast is obvious. The lack of Gunn 'Chiefs' recognised as such in their own time supports the idea of no early 'Clan Gunn' Chiefs.
[1089] See their biographies pages 147-149.

The consequence of the Countess's desire was simple - in 1803 an inquisition, more accurately called a retour[1090] - was held as to who was Chief of the Clan Gunn. Sinclair notes that '*of the notable persons* (involved in the inquisition) *... the personal respectability ... there can be no doubt.*[1091]*'* This is not surprising – one would not have expected anything less than the best for the Duchess-Countess of Sutherland. These retours are part of the Court of Session process.

Sinclair's summary of the event is;[1092]

The inquisition was made at the sheriff-court of Caithness, held at Thurso, 31st May 1803, in the presence of Mr William Brodie, sheriff substitute of the said county, by these subscribed honest and faithful men of the county, namely Captain James Mackay of Borgie, George Paterson arms-bearing, bailie of Thurso; Messrs Alexander Paterson, James Craig, James Waters, John Mackay, Alexander Brodie, Peter Swany, Junior, and Patrick Leith, all merchants in Thurso; Messrs Donald Robeson, William Sinclair and John Reid, solicitors there; Messrs William Munro and John Macdonald, schoolmasters there; and George Morison vintner there. These being sworn, having given their solemn oath, say that the said Hector Gunn (12,36) *... is the legitimate and nearest heir-male of the said deceased* (Chief) *Alexander Gunn* (8,9), *his great-great-grandfather...*[1093]

In other words, Hector Gunn (12,36) was declared Chief of the Clan Gunn by an important meeting which was part of the legal Court of Session process and the Chiefship title was then applied to the senior male members of his family line.

It was not merely a legal event - Clan Gunn Chief recognition is supported by many 19th century documents starting with the 1822 Clan Gunn tree and letter. These were by William Gunn of Reay[1094] who was considered by assorted local dignitaries (see the letter[1095]) as the person most knowledgeable in Gunn matters to create the Tree and make comments. Given this was done roughly only forty years after (11) Chief William Gunn died we are talking living memory for William Gunn of Reay so his support for the inquisition result is of importance.

In his 1822 letter William's support for (12,36) Chief Hector and (13,47) Chief George is shown where he wrote *'McKeamish, Chieftain of the Clangun ... heirship obtained by (13.47) Lieut. George Gunn, son of (12.36) Hector Gunn later merchant in Thurso.'* Note the use of '*Chieftain of the Clangun'* and *'McKeamish'* which applied to both (12,36) Chief Hector Gunn and his son (13,47) Chief George Gunn.

[1090] Retours 'generated from the result of an inquest heard by a jury to establish the right of an heir to inherit property. Under the feudal system of land tenure an heir had to prove the right to inherit and this was established by a jury of local landowners who were summoned by the local sheriff on instruction from the Chancery. The jury heard the pleas and decided on the rightful heir. The findings were returned or retoured to the Chancery who had the authority to confirm the inheritance and grant possession to the heir. Retours are especially important before 1868, as up until then it was not possible to leave heritable property in a will.' See https://www.genguide.co.uk/source/retours-of-services-of-heirs-scotland-land-property/ accessed 23 February 2024.

[1091] Pages 169-170, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

[1092] Page 168, Thomas Sinclair, *The Gunns*.

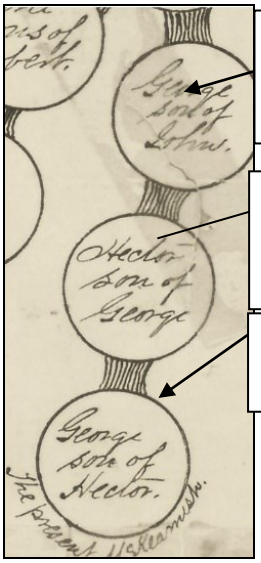
[1093] The bold is by me in this text.

[1094] See pages 294-296.

[1095] The complete 1822 letter can be found at https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53308802481/in/dateposted-public/ and the complete 1822 tree can be found at https://www.flickr.com/photos/199463589@N07/53307937552/in/dateposted-public/

William Gunn of Reay also showed[1096] in the 1822 Tree that (12,36) Hector's son, namely (13.47) George Gunn, was '*the present McKeamish.*' McKeamish[1097] (also spelt M'Hamish or MacHamish) in this usage meant 'Chief[1098] of the Clan Gunn' as shown by the letter.

From the 1822 Tree –



11.31 George *(Dalfridh Achsoriclate)* son of *10.24* John *(Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, Grimachary)*

12.36 (Chief) Hector son of *11.31* George. This Hector is the one declared Chief by the 1803 Inquisition

13.47 (Chief) George son of *12.36* (Chief) Hector. 'The present **McKeamish'**

Further support for this set of names and Chief links comes from other 19th century Clan Gunn Trees and the post-1918 New Hebrides Tree.

- The 1896 Tree gives the line of; (10,24) *John Gunn Kinbrace Grimachary* - with *'eldest son'* (11.31) '*George Gunn Achsoriclate'* – (12,36) *'**Chief** Hector Gunn Thurso d. 1803'* – (13,47) *'**Chief** George Gunn Factor Dunrobin d. 1859'* – further Gunns, including *'**Chief** Hector Gunn Agra Bank India d. 1874 No issue*.
- The 1868 and 1869 Trees also give – (10,24) '*John'* – (11.31) '*George'* – (12,36) '*Hector'* – (13,47) '*George … Factor for the Duke of Sutherland'* – further Gunns, ending (14) *'Hector present **Chief** Agra, India.'*
- The New Hebrides Tree[1099] by the Rev. William Gunn also records (10,24) '*John'* – (11,31) '*George'* – (12,36) '*Hector **Chief**'* – (13,47) '***Chief** George'* - (14) '*Donald no issue*,' (14) *Hector no issue*.

[1096] William Gunn was interested in the USA Gunn line of Bloomingdale New York perhaps being a Chief line. That was not possible for many reasons, one being that one of the direct Bloomingdale Gunns involved owed loyalty to Germany which ruled him, and his descendants out of being Clan Gunn Chiefs.
[1097] As said elsewhere in this text, Mackeamish – or MacHamish (son of James) – is really about indicating the Gunn family of Killernan but at times the word was equated with just the senior member of that family, the Chief.
[1098] The 'Clan Gunn Chief' term increases in usage from about this time and gathers strength in the later 1800s and 1900s.
[1099] The New Hebrides tree was written after World War One (there is reference in it to Gunns dying at Gallipoli) by a retired Gunn missionary to the New Hebrides. I suspect it is based on early work done in Scotland with some help from the Rev. Gunn of Watten given the amount of Watten information it contains.

In other words, all the known Clan Gunn Trees (1822-post 1918) accepted the 1803 inquisition result of (12,36) Hector Gunn being the Chief and show the same descendants, many with the word 'Chief.' That's over a hundred years of support for these Gunn chiefs.

Other documents in support of this line include –

- (13,47) Chief George Gunn being the No.1 member of the first Clan Gunn Society[1100] which started in 1821.
- And in the late 1960s Mark Rugg Gunn, page 208 wrote in his text *Clan Gunn* that (13,47) Chief George Gunn *'had been declared Chief in 1814'* and again on page 236 (13,47) he wrote that '*George Gunn,* (was) *the official Chief of the Gunns.'*

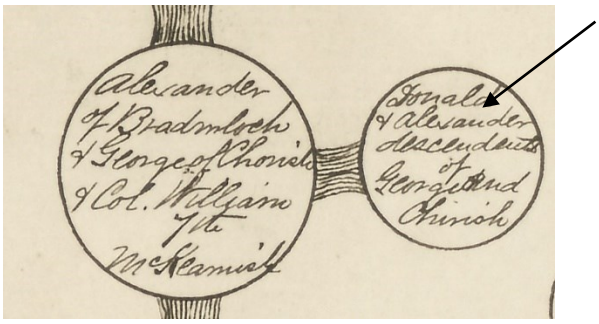
Summary In 1803 the 'Gunns of Killernan / MacHamish Gunn line' became the legal 'Chief of the Clan Gunn line' and (12,36) Hector Gunn became the legal Chief. Various documents show the acceptance of this line as the Chiefly line over the 19th and 20th centuries.

Part 2 – the Gunns of Corrish issue

Obviously not everyone agreed with the inquisition's decision but that goes for every judgment made by every legal committee since the start of time.

These disagreements[1101] mainly concerned claims that (10,20) George Gunn of Corrish, who was the immediately younger brother of (10,19) Chief Alexander Gunn of Badanloch, had descendants. Sinclair quickly dismisses this idea, see page 177 of his book.

The 1822 Clan Gunn Tree also dismisses the Corrish idea –



Donald + Alexander descendants of (10,20) George and Chorish – but with no further descendants given, so these two sons of George of Corrish died without issue. Given the 1822 letter was about who should be Chief of the Clan Gunn William of Reay would have included all descendants of George of Corrish. William of Reay would have been alive at the time of Donald and Alexander.

[1100] *Ibid*. 167-174.
[1101] There is confusion in Gunn history between 'Corrish Gunns' and 'MacHeorish – meaning George of Borrobol - Gunns' which has added to this problem.

The left side of the image shows (10,19) Chief *Alexander of Badanloch* + (10,20) *George of Chorish* + (10,22) *Col. William* (with further written *7th Mckeamish* being for 10,19 Chief Alexander). George of Corrish and Colonel William are the male siblings of Chief Alexander. Colonel William's descendants exist but do not hold the surname Gunn and are Dutch, both reasons being why they are not eligible to be Chief of the Clan Gunn.

The 1896 Clan Gunn Tree of Captain Alexander Gunn also supports the extinction of the George of Corrish line but in a different way. It records one son for George Gunn of Corrish - a William, drowned at sea.

Summary The central point remains - the 1803 inquisition decided who was Chief of the Clan Gunn, they were honourable men and would not have excluded Corrish Gunns if such existed. The chosen Chief was (12,36) Hector Gunn who died in 1803. And that's the law.

After Chief Hector died his son (13,47) George became Chief through due legal process as well. The next Clan Gunn Chief was (14) Donald Gunn 1828-1863 who died without issue and then came (15) Chief Hector Gunn 1830 – 1874 who also died without issue. And that was the end of the male line of Gunns from (11,31) George (Dalfridh, Achsoriclate) Gunn. Lord Lyon Sellar accepted[1102] in 2011 'the extinction of the heirs-male of… Hector Gunn.' So do I.

The Clan Gunn chiefship line then moved to George's younger, legitimate brother namely (11,32) Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton.

Part 3 – heirs female

But there is one issue which was not explored in 1803 but which matters now. In the old days Gunn Chiefs could only be male and could only descend through the male line. That is no longer true. In 2007 Lord Lyon Blair ruled that the Clan Gunn Chief could descend through the female line and by implication could be female. The normal Lord Lyon limitations would still apply as to Chiefship – in particular, the surname Gunn should be continuous and the Gunns must owe allegiance to the British Crown at the time they became the potential Chief.

Amazingly this 2007 ruling makes the 1803 decision even more accurate.

To explain. (9,15) Chief Donald Crotach had a daughter (10,23) Margaret Gunn. She was aunt to (11) Chief William Gunn who died in India. Margaret married (10,24) John (Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, Grimachary) Gunn[1103] and they were parents of (11,31) George (Dalfridh Achsoriclate) Gunn and grandparents of (12,36) Chief Hector Gunn who was the person appointed Chief by the 1803 Inquisition.

So, Margaret and her husband John both had the surname Gunn which meant the 2007 Lord Lyon judgement applies – and so we have a very direct link to the old Clan Gunn Chiefs.

[1102] Lord Lyon Sellar Interlocutor published Edinburgh 20 September 2011.
[1103] And who descended from John in Navidale of Borrobol Gunn, from the old Clan Gunn Chief line.

Impact? The 1803 Clan Gunn Chief decision had been accepted throughout the 19th century and much of the 20th century - now, post 2007, we also get an extremely direct link back to the original Chiefs of the Clan Gunn.

Conclusion The 1803 inquisition established 'Chief Hector, Chief George' line which died out of males in 1874 and continuously named Gunns. This meant the ongoing Clan Gunn Chief line went to the next senior line namely the younger, legal son of (10,23) Margaret Gunn and (10,24) John Gunn. This is the (11,32) Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton's line.

It is of note that 'Chief' Iain Gunn of Banniskirk House applied in January 1984 to be Chief of the Clan Gunn in the 20th century based on descent from (11,32) Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton so supporting the importance of this line. He wrote in the third paragraph of that application on page 3 where he wrote *'That the said **Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton** was the second son of John Gunn of Kinbrace and his wife Margaret Gunn of Badenloch, daughter of Donald Gunn of Badenloch, 6th MacHamish, **Chief of Clan Gunn** who died in 1725.'* (Bold is by me.) His earlier generations were not, though, continuously named Gunn nor is he the most senior of the Dalnaglaton line.

The Clan Gunn Society website accessed 2 August 2024 states that *'Iain Gunn of Banniskirk ... accepted that there might well be someone with a closer genealogical link to the last Chief and if such a person could prove an undisputed claim to the Chiefship he would readily stand down.'*

I could go on but in summary it is simple.

1) I have legally proved descent to Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton and therefore have legally proved descent from the traditional Clan Gunn Chief line albeit not in Scotland.

2) The holding of the Clan Gunn Convention / Derbhfine in 2015 was an error as shown by my legally proved Clan Gunn Chief descent and so the Convention's result was wrong and should be ignored.

How this problem will resolve only time will show.

2. The modern invention of a Chief 2015

Iain Gunn of Banniskirk was created Chief of the Clan Gunn in 2015 by Lord Lyon on the questionable basis that the direct line from the Clan Gunn Chiefs had died out. It has not. See Appendix 1. It is also extremely questionable as to whether Lord Lyon has the legal authority to make such an appointment.

*****

'... an elected Chief is alien to the whole principle of Celtic civilisation ...'
Lord Lyon Thomas Innes[1104]

The invention of a Clan Gunn Chief in 2015 by the Lord Lyon of the time is to be regretted and is questionable for two main reasons.

Firstly, the decision to make a Gunn Chief was made following a Gunn 'derbhfine' (invited meeting) called by Lord Lyon. That meeting did not follow the stated procedure / guidance issued by the Court of the Lord Lyon at that time. I know it did not follow the procedure / guidance as I was there – and incidentally there was no agenda for the meeting, nor have minutes of the meeting ever been issued.

The Lyon Court's stated procedure / guidance[1105] for such a meeting was –

(1) Where a blood link to a past Chief or Head of Name is likely but is not conclusively proven and it is wished to propose a particular person in that situation to be recognised as Chief.

(2) Where the main line of descent from a past Chief has died out and it is wished to recognise the Representer of a cadet line as Chief.

(3) Where neither blood link to a past Chief nor Representer of a cadet line can be identified but it is wished to propose a particular person of the surname as Commander. It is generally desirable that such a Commander should live in Scotland.

In other words, the meeting should firstly discuss someone who was very probably the senior (or very near) direct descendant of the Chief but who could not quite legally prove it, and consider that person for Chief. If no-one was in that position then the meeting should look at someone who was directly decended from the Chief albeit from a less direct line, and consider that person for Chief. If no-one fulfilled that position then – and only then – should the meeting choose someone else to act as Commander of the Clan – not Chief, just Commander. There was nothing in the guidelines to consider appointing a Clan Commander directly to Chief.

[1104] Page xxii from his Foreword to Frank Adams and Thomas Innes *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of The Scottish Highlands* 1934 edition.
[1105] http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/656.html accessed 18 July 2015.

Now the meeting paid no attention to these guidelines and just went straight to a motion saying the then Gunn Commander[1106] should be nominated for Chief. I voted against the motion. I note Lord Lyon Blair's view[1107] *'The derbhfine ... should not consider proposing a person for chief unless there is no real hope that a genealogically related descendant could ever be found.'* As said, this Gunn derbhfine made no attempt to discuss possible *'genealogically related'* direct descendants from Gunn Coroner – the 'Chief' line.

The Gunn 'Chief' line has certainly not died out. I note Lord Lyon Sellar's view[1108] in 2012 was that *'it has become evident that there is in all probability clear and proveable lines of descent senior to that of the present Commander'.* Lord Lyon Sellar made this comment when rejecting a petition to hold an earlier Gunn derbfhine which had the proposed aim of making the Commander Chief of the Gunns. Note how Lord Lyon Sellar's comment fits the Lord Lyon Court guidance for point 1 or 2 of what a derbfhine should do.

So, Lord Lyon Sellar believed that *'in all probability'* that 'Chief' lines senior to the Commander's existed but this 2015 Gunn debfhine was not interested in the possibility. In 2024 the College of Arms in London registered my genealogy back to Alastair Gunn of Dalnaglaton so it is now legally proved that I descend from him in England, Wales and parts of the British Commonwealth which makes the holding of a Convention seem very odd.

So, in summary, the first reason why the 'Gunn Chief' decision is questionable it is that the Gunn Convention did not follow the stated guidance / practice of the Court of the Lord Lyon. And it should not have been held as I now have legal proof of descent from the traditional Clan Gunn Chief line although, as said, only in England, Wales and parts of theBritish Commonwealth and not in Scotland.

The second and more serious reason why the 2015 'Gunn Chief' decision is highly questionable concerns whether Lord Lyon has the legal right to make judgement about Clan Chiefs. To explain - Lord Lyon's Court is not the most senior Scottish Court – the Court of Sessions is Scotland's supreme civil court. The Court of Sessions had stated / ruled long before the 2015 'Gunn Chief' issue that –

- *'The Lord Lyon cannot 'decide a disputed question of chiefship or chieftainship.'* [1109]

- *'... the Court excluded all questions relating to the chieftainship and the relative positions of the parties within the clan, holding that neither chiefship of a whole clan nor chieftainship of a branch of a clan was a legal status justiciable in a court of law, but had the character of a social dignity only, and, accordingly, that the Lord Lyon had no jurisdiction to decide the disputed question of who had right to the chieftainship either directly or incidentally…'* [1110]

[1106] I note the Gunn Commander had earlier applied to be Gunn Chief due to his descent but it had been rejected by a previous Lord Lyon. I also note his family's name in the past was not always Gunn.
[1107] Lord Lyon Blair, 19 February 2002 http://www.clanmacaulay.org.uk/node/69 accesed 21 May 2015.
[1108] http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/files/Gunn%20Family%20Convention%20-%20Interlocutor%20refusing%20petition%20in%20hoc%20statu.pdf accessed 19 May 2015.
[1109] *Maclean of Ardgour v. Maclean*, 1938 S.L.T. 49. From *Introduction to the Law of Scotland* by Gloag and Candlish Henderson, 9th edition, 1987, p. 25.
[1110] *Maclean of Ardgour v. Maclean* 1941 S.C. 613.

- *And one of the Judges, Lord Wark, said in his view 'I agree with your Lordships that Lyon has no jurisdiction to entertain a substantive declarator of chiefship of a Highland clan, or of chieftainship of a branch of a clan. ... The question of chiefship of a Highland clan, or chieftainship of a branch of a clan, is not in itself, in my opinion, a matter which involves any interest which the law can recognise… in my opinion, there is no practice or precedent which entitled Lyon to decide a question of disputed chiefship or chieftainship, either by itself or incidentally to a grant of arms…. '*[1111]

So the supreme court of Scotland, the Court of Session, has made it quite clear that Lord Lyon does NOT have the power to determine who is the Chief of a Clan. Incidentally I believe a Lord Lyon can withdraw matriculation of a Chief.[1112]

The Clan Gunn Chief issue is therefore not resolved; it's just been made more complex with the legal proof of my descent from Alexander Gunn of Dalnaglaton of the old Clan Gunn Chief line.

[1111] Lord Wark, in *Maclean of Ardgour v. Maclean* 1941 S.C. at p. 657.
[1112] Page 23 MacPherson of Cluny, *The Chiefs of Clan MacPherson.*

3. The Chief of the Clan Gunn – a simplified descendant list

As said, the first number before a name shows the generation of a person and the second number shows the seniority. The list starts with **1.1** Coroner Gunn *as the first generation and with seniority level 1 as he is the first known Gunns. If only one number exists (or the second number uses Latin numerals i, ii, iii and so on) it shows that person is generally not further followed. This normally means that person has died without issue, or nothing further is known about that person or the person is too far away from the main Clan Gunn Chief line to be of interest (for example, no longer having the surname Gunn). I did not add seniority to any of generation 15 and beyond.*

A name in ***bold*** *indicates the person also appears elsewhere on this list – close cousins do marry.*

1.1 Coroner GUNN (-c. 1450).
Spouse, hereafter Sp. (unknown).
2.2 James GUNN (c. 1420-).
Sp. (unknown).
3.3 William (MacHamish) Cattaig GUNN (c. 1450-).
Sp. (unknown).
4.4 William (MacHamish) GUNN (c. 1480-).
Sp. (unknown).
5.5 Unknown (MacHamish) GUNN (c. 1510-). With brother **5.** Alexander (c. 1512).
Sp. (unknown).
6.6 David GUNN (c. 1530-).
Sp. (unknown).
7.7 Alexander MacDavid GUNN (c. 1560-c. 1624).
Sp. Barbara MACKAY (c. 1570-).
8. William (Mhor) GUNN (c. 1593-). *Died without issue, hereafter dwi.*
7.8 William (Beag) GUNN (c. 1561-).
Sp. (unknown).
8.9 Alexander (Killernan) GUNN (c. 1590-c. 1657).
Sp. Mary Christiane (Dame) (Lady Fowlis) MACKAY (c. 1598-c. 1657).
9.13 John (Killernan) GUNN (c. 1636-).
Sp. Katherine / Christina SINCLAIR (c. 1640-).
10. Alexander GUNN (c. 1658-).
10. Unknown Male 1 GUNN (c. 1660-).
10. Unknown Male 2 GUNN (c. 1662-).
9.14 Catherine GUNN (c. 1637-).
Sp. Lt. Col. Angus MACKAY of MELNESS (c. 1630-c. 1702).
10. Descendants (-).
9. Alexander GUNN (c. 1638-).
Sp. Christina MACKAY (c. 1645-).
9.15 (Chief[1113]) Donald (Crotach) GUNN (c. 1642-c. 1708).
Sp. Margaret SUTHERLAND (-).
10.19 Alexander (of Badanloch later of Wester Helmsdale) GUNN (c. 1681-c. 1763).

[1113] Because Donald Crotach's descendants are the ongoing traditional Clan Gunn Chief line - I have added (Chief) here although I am not totally sure he was one.

Sp. Margaret (Mary) MACKAY of KIRTOMY (c. 1690-c. 1746).

11. Mary GUNN (c. 1713-).

Sp. Major Hugh MACKAY of REARCHAR DURNESS (-).

12. Elizabeth MACKAY (-).

11. Elizabeth GUNN (c. 1715-).

11. John GUNN (c. 1719-).

11. Alexander / William? GUNN[1114] (c. 1722-1746). *dwi*

Sp. Ann / Anne ROSE.

11. William GUNN (c. 1755-1780). *dwi*

11. Morrison GUNN (c. 1760- earlier than 1780). *dwi*

10.20 George (Corrish) GUNN[1115] (1682-).

Sp. Isobel POLSON (-).

11.27 Donald GUNN (-). *dwi*

11.28 Alexander GUNN (-). *dwi*

10.21 Esther GUNN (1685-).

Sp. Donald MACKAY of SKERRAY (-).

11.29 Angus MACKAY (-).

11. Other MACKAYS

10.22 William (Lt. Col.) GUNN (c. 1686-). *William fights for the Netherlands and so lost British loyalty which made his descendants ineligible to be Chief. The line also ran out of male Gunns.*

Sp. Ann ROSS (-).

10.23 Margaret GUNN *Daughter of **9.15** (Chief) Donald Crotach Gunn.*

Sp. 10.24 John (Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, Grimachary) GUNN (c. 1670). *As said, see later bold for further on Borrobol Gunns.*

11.31 George (Dalfridh, Achsoriclate) Gunn.[1116] *The male line became extinct.*

12.36 Chief Hector GUNN (-1803).

Sp. Janette MACKAY (-).

13.47 Chief George GUNN (1787-1859).

Sp. Margaret MACDONALD (-).

14. Jessie GUNN (c. 1826-1887).

Sp. James Andrew MILLER (c. 1818-1853).

Sp. Rev. Arthur DIXON (-).

14. Christina MacDonald GUNN (1826-).

Sp. Donald MacLeod SMITH (-).

14. Chief Donald GUNN (c. 1828-1863).

14. Chief Hector GUNN (12 October 1830- 20 August 1874).

Sp. Mary Elizabeth MACKILLIGAN (-).

14. Margaret GUNN (c. 1834-1916).

Sp. Malcolm Charles MACHARDY (1829-1891).

14. Elizabeth Sutherland GUNN (1835-????).

13. Janet / Jessie GUNN (-).

Sp. William MACKAY (-).

[1114] Various records offer competing names but the same facts.

[1115] The extinction of this line is made clear by the 1822 Clan Gunn tree. Confusion about possible descent from this line has probably been because people have mistaken *Corrish* Gunns with *MacHeorish* Gunns (being George of Borrobol Gunns) in less literate times.

[1116] There is a potential brother for George and his brother Alexander namely, the probably illegitimate, Captain John Gunn of the 12th Foot who was born, perhaps, in 1745.

13. Robert GUNN (-).

11.32 Alexander (Dalnaglaton) GUNN (1685 - 1765).

Sp. Janet / Jean (Dalnaha) McLeod / MacLeod

12.37 John (Dalnaglaton, Braehour) Gunn[1117] (1721-1810). *1st son*

Sp. Mary (Rowens) Dunbar, descendants *including*

13.48 Donald (Braehour and Brawlbin) GUNN (1765-1861).

Sp. 14. Catherine (Osclay) Gunn (-1870)

8.10 John (in Navidale of Borrobol) GUNN (c. 1591-).

9.16 George Borrobol GUNN (c. 1639-). *Descendants, as well as the below John, including some who migrated to the Red River Settlement in Canada. These descendants include the Reverend Alexander Gunn of Bloomingdale (USA) and his line.*[1118]

10.24 John (Borrobol, Kinbrace Farm, Rumsdale, Grimachary) GUNN (c. 1670). Sp. 10.23 Margaret Gunn, daughter of (Chief) Donald Crotach Gunn. *Important descendants, see earlier **10.23** entry.*

8.11 Donald Scholar (Kinbrace) GUNN (c. 1592-).

Sp. (unknown).

9.17 William (Kinbrace) GUNN (-).

Sp. (Anna Cordover?[1119]).

10.25 Adam (Kinbrace) GUNN (-1709).

Sp. (unknown).

11.33 William (Kinbrace[1120] Houstry Dunbeath) GUNN (-c. 1740).

Sp. (Anna Sutherland?[1121]).

12.43 Adam (Houstry Mulbuie[1122]) GUNN (-1776).

Sp. (unknown).

13.54 Rev. Robert (Latheron) GUNN (1775-1860).

Sp. Three WIVES (-).

14. Gordon GUNN (-).

14. William GUNN (-).

14. Rev. Thomas GUNN (-).

14. Adam (Assynt) GUNN (-).

14. Cecily GUNN (-).

14. Matilda GUNN (-).

14. Nancy GUNN (-).

14. Margaret GUNN (-).

14. Janet GUNN (-).

13. Rev. William (Golspie) GUNN (1776-). *dwi*

13. Ann GUNN (-).

[1117] John had many other descendants including the Hon. Donald Gunn of Manitoba, Canada and William Gunn of Waranga Basin, Victoria, Australia.

[1118] This Bloomingdale line was thought to be a possible Chief of the Clan Gunn line for many years. It was not possible as the Borrobol Gunn line was not the senior Gunn line and, also, the Reverend Alexander Gunn of Bloomingdale's father George Gunn was a member of the Hessian military service by 29 May 1784 when he was at Digby in Canada as an Assistant Quarter Master. This made Alexander and his descendants ineligible to be Chief of the Clan Gunn as George no longer owed loyalty to the British Royal Family but to the German State of Hesse.

[1119] NLS document 208 Deposit 313/208.

[1120] This William returned the Kinbrace Estate to the Sutherland Estate, the owners.

[1121] NLS document 208 Deposit 313/208.

[1122] The Mulbuie Gunns are an under-rated line in Gunn history.

Sp. Alexander CAMPBELL (-). *Canada.*

12.44 Robert GUNN (-).

Sp. (unknown).

13.55 William GUNN (-).

Sp. (unknown).

14. Adam (Dunbeath) GUNN (-). *Descendants.*

Sp. (unknown).

12.45 John (Houstry Dunbeath Kinbrace) GUNN (-1780).

13. Alexander (Osclay) GUNN (1752-1820).

Sp. Barbara WEIR / WHEIR (1760-1833).

14. Catherine (Osclay) GUNN (c. 1782-1870).

Sp. 13.48 Donald (Braehour and Brawlbin) GUNN (1765-1861).

*Important descendants, see earlier detail on **13.48**.*

14. George (Wick) GUNN (1784-1855). *Descendants*

Sp. Anne RHIND (-).

14. Robert GUNN (1792-).

14. Sgt. John (Aberdeen) GUNN (1796-).

Sp. (unknown). *Descendants*

14. Margaret GUNN (1797-).

Sp. Alexander SUTHERLAND (-).

14. James (Osclay) GUNN (1800-1870).

Sp. Christina MACLEOD (-1884). *Descendants*

14. Adam (USA) GUNN (1803-). *Descendant.*

14. William GUNN (-1848).

Sp. Margaret CORMACK (1811-1898).

14. Alexander GUNN (-1828).

8.12 William (Acheneccan) GUNN[1123] (c. 1593-).

Sp. (unknown).

9.18 Donald GUNN (-).

Sp. (unknown).

10.26 William GUNN (-).

Sp. (unknown).

11.34 Robert GUNN (-).

Sp. (unknown).

12.46 William GUNN (-).

Sp. (unknown).

13.56 Robert (Sennachy) GUNN (- 1810).

Sp. (unknown).

14. Alexander GUNN (-). *Merchant of Thurso. Descendants.*

Sp. (unknown).

*Other descendants of **13.56** Robert* (Sennachy) GUNN *include*

- Sgt William (Durness) GUNN (1778-1861)
  - Sp. Isabella SYME (-). *Many descendants.*
- David (Catechist) GUNN (-1827).
  - Sp. Catherine ROSS (-). *Descendants*.

[1123] I have not fully explored this line.

4. A reason why the Orkney Islands Gunn origin myth may have started

The traditional 'Clan Gunn' myth is that the 'Chief' Gunns descended from the Orkney Islands ruling family, with the very unlikely implication that all Gunns share this descent. This Orkney Islands descent idea is totally wrong as I have already discussed.

But how did this myth start? Obviously one must consider wish fulfilment in the 1800s; due to the British Royal Family Scottish interest and Sir Walter Scott, Clan history became popular – and often very fictional.

But there may well be more than 18th Century romanticisation to blame for the Clan Gunn Orkney Islands myth. One needs to go back to the Romans - and earlier. Ptolemy (c. 90 CE - c.168 CE) records 'Orcas' or 'Orkas' – the Orkneys – on mainland Britain. 'Orcas' is often thought of as being Duncansby Head[1124] but there is definitely an alternative view (rightly or wrongly) which places Orkas in Strathnaver - *'Strathnavern which Ptolemy called Orcas'*[1125]; *'Orcas a promontory on the north side of Scotland'*[1126]; *'The highest is in Strathnaver, and to Ptolemy it is Orcas or Tarvedum'*[1127] and *'Torriedale Head seems to be Orcas Promonorium of that map, unless Strathy Head should be Orcas'*[1128] and so on. To be fair, Ptolemy repeated a position put forward by Pytheas of Massilia (Marseilles) circa 325 BCE who also put Orkas in the northeast corner of mainland Britain.

The implication for early Gunn 'history' is was there a tendency to accept - or hope for - Orkney Islands links to the Clan Gunn due to these very early geographers / historians misplacing[1129] where the Orkney Islands were. I mean, the simplistic position would go '*Of course the Clan Gunn is descended from the Orkney Islands – even Ptolemy marked Strathnaver as Orkney land...'*

[1124] http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/earlyrefs.htm accesed 29 April 2014.
[1125] Page 15, George Buchanan, *The History of Scotland*, 1827 edition; also supported in his 1751 edition (the 1852 edition suggests otherwise).
[1126] Alexander Macbean, *A Dictionary of Ancient Geography*.
[1127] http://maps.nls.uk/atlas/blaeu/page.cfm?id=917 accessed 29 April 2014; being from Joan Blaeu 1596-1673 'Scotiae' with later commentary stored by the National Library of Scotland and http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-352-1/dissemination/pdf/vol_042/42_079_094.pdf .
[1128] http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/scottish-history-society-cn/publications-of-the-scottish-history-society-volume-1-toc/page-17-publications-of-the-scottish-history-society-volume-1-toc.shtml accessed 29 April 2014.
[1129] This misplacement applied to pre-Pictish and Pictish times; the Norse were not in the Orkney Islands at that time.

5. Concerning the Gunns, according to Thomas Smibert 1850

The following is from pages 170-173 of (ed.) Thomas Smibert, *The Clans of the Highlands of Scotland Being an Account of their Annals, Separately & Collectively with Delineations of their Tartans, and Family Arms*, 1850 Edinburgh, James Hogg. Smibert provides an interesting take on Gunn history; note the lack of Orkney Gunn origin, the Gaelic / Celtic origin of the name, his reading of the Keith battles as being with 'Caiths'ness peopleand his view that MacHamish is nothing but a sept name.

*****

'CLAN GUNN

Most writers on the annals of the Scottish Highlanders do not reckon the Clan Gunn as among the septs entitled to a full or separate notice at all. It strikes us however that they are perhaps among the very purest remnants of the Gael to be found about Sutherlandshire and the adjoining parts. So thinks Stewart of Garth, obviously, since he takes care in mapping the territories of the clans, to allude to Sutherlandshire as including the Gunns or Clan Guinn. It is probable that they belong mainly to the same stock which produced the great body of the Sutherland population, that latter name having been adopted, as already explained, from the title given to the region by the Norsemen, and not being connected with the true origin of the Gaelic natives.

There are several stories on record respecting the descent of the Gunns (Guns or Guins). … The name seems to be Gaelic or Celtic, and identical with that of Gwynne, so common among the Celts or Gwaelsh of the west of England. The word in the Erse tongue has certain meanings, rendering it not inappropriate as a name for a wild tribe of mountaineers in the old days. As a substantive, *guin* signifies "fierceness," and also "pain," "a wound," "a sting," "a dart;" while as a verb, it means "to wound pierce or sting;" and, as an adjective, framed from the same root, it has the sense of "sharp keen bitterly malicious." So say Drs Norman Macleod and Daniel Dewar in their Gaelic dictionary. It therefore seems likely that *guin* was a generic term applied to some of the rudest and most northerly of the Scottish Highlanders in very early times, as well as to the hill men of Wales, similarly situated. The name of the *Siol Cuinn*, applied to the Highlanders of Argyle, is probably the very same name. However, the names are now Gunn and Wynne, according to the common modes of spelling …

In short we repeat our belief that the name of Gunn had a generic origin, indicating a "fierce" tribe; and that they had been so christened by those around them who first possessed or attained to any knowledge of the art of nomenclature, or had occasion for its use. Nor need the Clan Gunn distress themselves about the barbarism thus "nominally" imputed to their sires. Even the general name of "Scots" appears to come from an Erse term signifying, in its mildest sense, "wanderers;" the Belgae, again, were "ravagers;" while multitudes of other entire nations cannot boast even of such decent sources for their designations. These, however, became commonly permanent, simply because the Romans (in most instances) moulded the primitive terms which struck their fancy, or came in their way, into their own tongue, in referring to the countries conquered by them; and because nearly all the early learning of these said countries sprung from and through them, the first native historians having no other *written* languages at command, save the classical ones, and especially the Latin. It may be

thought that this subject has been too much dwelt upon, considering the Gunns to have long been but a secondary sept of Sutherlandshire; but, in reality, the question has a general bearing. Such native stories as that of "Guin the Dane" cannot stand, in our eyes, against the more common-sense view of the subject, although these stories may be found in manuscripts two or three hundred years old. One word of one able and educated historian is generally of far greater worth than hundreds of merely traditional tales recorded by men unknown, and men for the most part plainly unqualified for the task of repeating even hearsays of hearsays correctly and intelligibly. Every person of ordinary sense must have noticed, besides, how inconsistent is the conduct commonly of those who love to refer to old MSS. They will often laugh loudly when pointing to witch-stories, appearances of the devil, and so forth; and yet in the next sentence will they gravely accept the reporters of these as authorities on ancient genealogical and historical questions of moment, though the same blinded ignorance must have actuated the writers on the one point as well as the others, and though sound and really credible annalists may have told a very different tale.

The Gunns are represented as living mainly, as far as they were a separate sept, to the north of Dunrobin Castle, which stands on the eastern coast of Sutherlandshire. … Several traditions respecting the Gunns are current in their native district. The following is curious … "Keiths" mentioned are plainly the men of *Kaith*ness merely; and the word "crowner" (if we are to interpret the Gaelic word chruner as crowner) seems to imply merely the judicial agent or representative of the superior lords of the country.

"Towards the end of the fifteenth century the chief of the Clan Gun (or Gunn here adopted as the best form of the name) was George Gunn, who lived in feudal dignity in his then impregnable castle of Halbury; but he was better known as Crowner Gunn, or as he was called by the Highlanders, "N'm Braistach-more," from a great brooch which he wore as the badge or cognisance of his office of crowner He had a deadly feud with the chief of the Keiths; and having met in St Tyre's chapel for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation, but without success, they were solemnly agreed to decide their quarrel, if they could not do so amicably on a future day, by equal combat between twelve sons or relatives of each chieftain. The crowner and the leader of the Keiths approached each other in full armour; but it was soon discovered by the Gunns that there were two riders on every horse in the party of the Keiths, and consequently the latter party had twenty-four men opposed to the twelve followers of the crowner. This vile stratagem instantly revealed to the Gunns that their destruction, by unfair means, was determined upon. They scorned, notwithstanding the great odds against them, to retreat before their enemies the Keiths; and fought most desperately, but could not withstand the great odds that opposed them. After a long-continued struggle, the survivors on both sides were so much exhausted that the combat was mutually dropped - the Keiths being so far the victors as to leave the field with their banner displayed, and to be able to carry with them their slain companions; while in the ranks of the Gunns, the crowner and seven of his party were killed, and the remaining five were all severely wounded. The Keiths proceeded to Dilred Castle in Strathmore, then occupied by Sutherland of Dilred, where they were hospitably entertained. The five surviving Gunns, who were all sons of the crowner, also retired, but tarried at another stream, since then called Alt Torquil after Torquil Gunn, one of the survivors, who there dressed the wounds of his brothers. Towards evening Henry-beg, the youngest of the surviving brothers of the Gunns, proposed that they should follow the Keiths and

endeavour to obtain revenge, even by stratagem such as the Keiths had recourse to. They arrived at Dilred Castle soon after nightfall. On approaching the castle, its wooden windows or shutters were found open, and around a large fire in the lowest apartment the survivors of the Keithe were quaffing bumpers of ale; and Henry, who went close to one of the windows, heard them narrate, with boisterous delight, the losses sustained by the Gunns. The chief of the Keiths, not apprehensive of any danger, accidentally approached the window where Henry stood, and the latter then bent his bow, and in another instant his arrow pierced the chieftain's heart; Henry at the same time boldly accompanying the deadly flight of his arrow with the exclamation (afterwards used in the North Highlands as a proverb) of "The Gunn's compliments to Keith." The old chief dropped down dead; a panic seized the other Keiths; and the three Gunns, having darted forward to the door of the cattle, slew some of the first persons who ventured out by it; but finding that they could not retain their position long, Henry and his two brothers retired silently under cover of the darkness of the night, and hurried back to the assistance of the other brothers, who had been unable to accompany them."

Other stories are told of the Gunns, but their history in old days, as observed, is chiefly mixed up with the general annals of the Sutherland and Caithness tribes. In the "Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland" written up to 1630 by Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstone, and continued to 1651 by another party, several notices of the Clan Gunn occur incidentally. At a skirmish which took place in A.D. 1517 "William Mackames-Wick-*Chruner* (the name being plainly the same as "Crowner" just noticed) cheeff of the Clan Gunn in Southerland" was present against the Mackys or Mackays and gave them a signal defeat, two or three hundred men being slain on the unsuccessful side. The exact words of Sir R. Gordon writing not very long afterwards, are – "Their wer two hundred of the Strathnaver men slain, theirtie two of the Seill (Siol) Faill and fyfteen of the Seill-Thomas. The commander of the vanquished in this affair is called "Neill-Mackean-Mack-Angus" and his brother is styled John Moir-Mackean from whom "descended a race of people called the Slaight-Ean-Voir," which means the race of John the Great. The whole of this extract proves accuracy in Gaelic nomenclature to be a point utterly unattainable. Indeed, this battle with the "Mackys" may only be a version of the fight with the Keiths. The name of Keith (odd as it may seem) is easily changed into Mac-Kays or Mac-Kaiths. The common source of the people is further made obvious in reality.

Sir Robert Gordon proceeds to say that "William Mackames (cheiftane of the Clangun), heer mentioned, was called Cattigh. He wes borne and bred in Southerland. From him are descended the Clangun that dwell at this day in Strathully. They have alwyse since that tyme had the lands of Killeirnan for ther service, from the Earles of Southerland, unto whom they have ever been both trusty and faithfull."

It is plain, from these and other incidents, that the people of Sutherland Caithness and Moray, were always named from their localities when viewed *en masse*, and from their immediate sires when spoken of specially, having no baptismal registrations. The Sutherland men are spoken of always as fighting with southern parties of the name of "John-Roy-Moray," and such like; or else they fought with Mackians or Mackys on their northern borders. Mackames (which means Macjames or Machamish) seems to be the oldest Gaelic sept name of the Gunns. The point is not of peculiar moment, the conclusion being clear that they are true Celtic Highlanders.

At the close of the sixteenth century, there seem indeed to have occurred bloody feuds betwixt the Sutherland and Caithness men, or, in other words, betwixt the Gunns and a branch of the Mackays. Sir Robert Gordon says, that the horrible encounters, the bloodshed, the spoiling, together with "their asperous names," prevent him from giving details. The Clan Gunn appear to have come by the worst at times between the Caithness and Sutherland earls. At a meeting of the two (says Sir Robert Gordon) "it was concluded amongst them that some of the Clangun should be *made away;"* and the poor Clan Gunn seemed destined to destruction. The business ended in that final separation of the Gunns from the Mackays and Sinclairs, to whom they had been before attached, which has been mentioned. Sir R Gordon says on the subject of the tribe; -" The Clangun are a race of people dwelling within the diocese of Catteness and are divyded among the thrie countries of Southerland Catteness and Strathnaver. They are verie courageous, rather desperat than valiant." They came at last from under the power of the Mackays and Sinclairs, as said, and such of the tribe as have still dwelt in Southerland have ever been faithful to their masters, the earles of Southerland. Their "commander and chieftane is called Mack-wick-Kames, and remaineth alwyse in Killiernan in Strathully, wher he hath some landes and possessions from the earles of Southerland, as a fee for his service." Alluding to his own time, the chronicler adds and interpolates the remark, that "John Robson (Mackames) chiftain of the Clangun in Catteness, did now of late, the yeir of God 1618, mak his refuge of Southerland, having fallen out with the Earle of Catteness and Macky; so that this whole surname doth for the present depend altogether upon the house of Southerland."

It was in the year 1586 that the Gunns were pursued both by the men of Caithness and Sutherland. Almost by chance they fought the former and beat them. This proved the critical event in the fortunes of the Gunn family. At first, indeed, both the Caithness and Sutherland earls turned their powers against the sept, and took captive the next chief George (Mack-ean Mack-rob) Gunn after a skirmish in which he fought most stoutly, and being vanquished, threw himself into a lake, "sore-wounded," to make a last struggle for life and liberty. After being liberated, as it is said, he attached himself to the party to whom he deemed himself most deeply indebted, the Earl of Sutherland; and the clan and family became fixed adherents, as related, of that noble house. It was not until the year 1619, however, that they were formally dispossessed of all their lands held under the Caithness family, and also of their holdings under the Mackays; whereupon the whole "retired themselves with their families, into Sutherland." Alexander (Davidson or) Gunn and his race were placed by Sir Robert Gordon in Strathully. Some small portions of the old Caithness possessions, however, were afterwards recovered.

It is clear, from this whole and rather confused story, that the Gunns had been a branch of the purest aborigines of the north. The Sinclairs and such like baronial incomers might gain the upper hand as rulers through regal favours and other causes; but they could not materially change the breed of the people.

It is remarkable enough, that the admitted head of this genuine tribe of the indigenous Gael of northern Scotland, George Gunn Esq., of Sutherlandshire, holds at this hour nearly the same position, relatively to the main lords of the soil, that the before-mentioned *crowner*, or justiciary of the same family, seems to have held two or three centuries since. ….'

6. Helen (Gunn) of Braemore (a Victorian poem)

A Victorian version of the Helen Gunn of Braemore[1130] myth discussed in chapter 7.2 is in the following poem.[1131] It was published in James Traill Calder's 1855 collection *Poems from John O'Groats* but may have been published earlier. Calder first worked as a '*private tutor for the Rev Mr Gunn of Caithness'*.[1132] For a poem of similar theme see 'The Curse of Moy. A Highland Tale' by J. B. S. Morritt which gained real fame when collected in Sir Walter Scott's *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders*.

Helen of Braemore by James Traill Calder

'Tis summer eve—the setting sun goes down,
Gilding yon mountains desolate and brown,
That giant-like in naked grandeur soar
Above thy sweet secluded glen Braemore !
Lo ! in the midst, uprising like a cone,
Stands the proud Pap, fantastic and alone.
With long dark belt, magnificent and high,
The shadowy Scaraben is swelling nigh ;
While o'er the whole in eminence and height,
Majestic Morven towers upon the sight,
Capp'd with the cloud that—beauteous to behold—
Looks like a glittering diadem of gold.

The happy lark that carolled all the day
O'er mead and moor, hath sung his latest lay,
And the gay linnet, too, hath hushed the note
That flowed so sweetly from his little throat ;
But from the moorland waste, the plover's wail
And curlew's lonely cry are on the gale,
Blent with the snipe's peculiar bleating sound,
And wild bee's dreamy murmur floating round.

But who is she that at the close of day
Trips o'er the gteensward like a " vision gay,"
To meet her lover in the gleaming bright,

[1130] The vision of woman in Scott's novels is of the delicate, home-based female and this stereotype infects Clan histories. The 'Helen Gunn of Braemore' story is a Gunn example supporting this image (see http://clangunn.weebly.com/helen-gunn-of-braemore-myth.html accessed 12 August 2019). Professor Celeste Ray highlights the limited role for women in today's Clan Societies because it's about *'male visions of the* (Scottish) *heritage'* see pages 90-94 Prof. Celeste Ray *Highland Heritage ; Scottish Americans in the American South*. Professor Ray is Professor of Anthropology at *'Sewanee; The University of the South'*. Dated sex role stereotypes help explain the elderly profile of Clan Society membership – and suggest a major challenge in the future as younger generations are progressively alienated from being restricted to such roles.

[1131] Some may consider this poem worthy of the 'poet' William McGonagall.

[1132] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Traill_Calder accessed 14 August 2018.

Her youthful features beaming with delight?
'Tis Helen Gunn, the beauty of Braemore,
Whose fame hath gone to many a distant shore.
Fain would the muse portray that lovely maid,
In nature's own simplicity arrayed.
Her native Highland plaid disposed with care,
Adorns the figure of the charming fair,
And falls around her in a graceful fold,
Clasped at the bosom with a brooch of gold.
The silken snood confines her raven hair,
That clusters richly round her forehead fair.
But who the sweetness of her face may speak ?
The rose-like bloom upon her virgin cheek—
The large dark eye, so beautiful and bright,
Whose lustre fills the gazer with delight—
The oval countenance—the snow-white brow—
And honied lips, where love sits smiling now.
And then her voice's music, when she sung
Some touching ball'ad in her native tongue,
Flowed with a dulcet melody and swell,
That bound the ear in a delicious spell.

Like a sweet wild-flower blooming in the shade,
The Keith's rude Chieftain saw the lovely maid,
Her form, where grace and beauty seemed to vie,
At once attracted his licentious eye.
Inflamed with ardent passion, much he strove
From time to time to gain the lady's love ;
But still a deaf ear to his suit she turned,
And all his offi'ers resolutely spurned.
So when he found that all his practised art
And flattery failed to touch the maiden's heart,
With wounded pride and keen resentment fired,
A dubious threat he uttered and retired.

Among the hills that tower so proudly up,
There lay a glen embosomed like a cup—
A sweet, romantic spot beyond compare,
Where oft the straggling wild deer made their lair ;
The mountain-daisy and the heather-bell
Were thickly scattered o'er the fairy dell,
With many a bright and nameless flower beside,
That yearly budded there, and bloomed, and died.
In this secluded spot, when day was done,

Sat Helen and her lover, Alick Gunn.
Her kinsman he, a sprightly youth and fair—
'Twas long since they in heart aifianced were.
While yet but children sporting in the glen,
They seemed as destined for each other then.
Still hand in hand were seen the little pair,
Prattling together without thought or care.
They ne'er were separate ; and, on sunny days,
They played together on the broomy braes ;
0ft chased the painted butterfly and bee,
And laughed and shouted in their sportive glee.
And when, at length, a hardy stripling grown,
If Alick chanced to roam abroad alone,
The exulting boy would bring home with him still,
For her, the choicest berries of the hill,
Some moorfowl's eggs, or bunch of scented thyme,
With radiant wild flowers, gathered in their prime
Along the lofty Scaraben and Pap,
And lay the treasure in his favourite's lap.
Their love grew stronger as they grew in years,
Without that passion's jealousies and fears,
For life as yet was all a happy dream,
Radiant with fancy's first and brightest beam ;
While hope still pointed with a smile of joy
To future years of bliss without alloy.

In Corriechoich's romantic bosom fair,
At early gloaming sat the youthful pair.
Whate'er the cause, on Alick's manly brow
A cloud of anxious thought seemed resting now,
And oft a struggling sigh escaped his breast,
That told how much his spirit was depressed.
The kindly maiden prayed the youth to tell
If aught distressed him, if he felt unwell.
" My dearest Helen, if I seem to be
More sad than wont, 'tis all for sake of thee.
'Tis said the Keith has offered thee his hand,
With all his wealth, and heritage, and land ;
And, though I scarce can doubt thy plighted faith,
To me the torturing thought is worse than death."

" My Alick, why thus needlessly cast down?
Distrust me not, my heart is still thine own.
Oh ! I would sooner die than wed that man,

Who bears the name of a detested clan.
Thou dost remember (’tis a tale of woe
To make the heart sick, and the tears to flow,)
How, in the bloody Chapel of St Tayre,
Our sires by them most foully butchered were.
No, no, the Keith need not excite thy fears,
Heaven is my witness, and these truthful tears !
I love him not—his bride I ne’er shall be,
His suit is hateful as his race to me ;
No one on earth shall wed me ’gainst my will,
The heart I gave thee once thou hast it still.”

“ And. is thy young heart still my own ?
O ! then, I am to-night the happiest of men ;
I wronged thee Helen—but ’twas the excess
0f love too strong for language to express ;
Yes, love the deepest and the most unfeigned,
With not one gross or selfish feeling stained—
’Twas love that gave these jealous fears their birth,
And dashed with shade my brightest dream on earth.
Then let me clasp thee once more to my breast,
Since all those anxious cares are laid to rest.”

Before the lovers parted for the night,
Beneath the holy stars that burned so bright,
’Twas fixed that they within a month should wed—
How oft they wished that long, long month were fled.

The moon is up, and beautiful and bright
Pours o’er the lonely glen a flood of light.
In dazzling masses piled against the sky,
The lofty mountains wear a look of joy ;
The moorland stream is glancing in her rays,
And near at hand the honest watch-dog bays.
In yon ancestral hall are sounds of mirth,
Which seems to-night the happiest home on earth ;
For now, in all her beauty’s bloom and pride,
The lovely Helen is become a bride.

The wine-cup circles round the guests to cheer,
The bagpipe’s notes are thrilling on the ear ;
And many a foot is tripping it with glee,
And all is gladness there and revelry.
There comes no thought of harm to cloud their joy,

“On with the dance,” and fill the wine-cup high.

Among the guests, tho’ blind and aged now,
None happier seemed that night than Evan Gow,
The grey-haired bard, who many a night before
Had sung the joys and sorrows of Braemore.
Cheered with the mirth that did each breast inspire,
He caught a portion of his former fire,
And in a voice unbroken yet and strong,
Thus poured his rude extemporaneous song :—

THE BARD’S SONG

The harp that has rung with the strains of the fight,
Shall to beauty and love be devoted to night ;
For the maiden is wed that we all did adore,
The pride of our valley, the flower of Braemore.

As the stately foxglove with its bright purple bell,
Outstrips all the flowers in the desert and dell,
So the sweet Helen Gunn, with her beauty so rare,
Excels all our maidens, the flower of our fair.

Her looks with the raven in darkness may vie,
And dark is the hue of her beautiful eye,
And sweet is her breath as the fragrance that flows
From our own native thyme, in the moorland that grows.

Tho’ here we are all full of joy and delight,
There are hearts in the glen that are breaking to-night ;
And many a sigh, from the sad bosom wrung,
Is heaving for Helen the charming and young.

The Keith, in the lowlands, that dastard abhorred,
For the loss of the maiden may brandish his sword ;
But we mind not his threats—let him come to Braemore,
And we’ll give him a taste of the Highland claymore.

May the choicest of blessings descend from show,
On the gallant young man and his dear ladye love ;
And long may they flourish in beauty and pride,
Like the ash and the birch on yon green mountain side.

There is a hireling band of armed men,
With stealthy footsteps marching through the glen,
And at their head on fiery barb is seen

A fearless chief of dark and daring mien.
There is a wild impatience in his look,
That no impediment would seem to brook;
His brow is knit—and oft his eye of fire
Flashes with fury and indignant ire.
In his stern visage one may clearly read
That man is bent upon some desperate deed.

What sudden sight arrests the eyes of all ?
That *gloomy* leader stalks into the hall :
Alone he enters there, without his band,
The ruthless falchion glittering in his hand.
At first the revellers in mute surprise
Survey the unbidden guest that damps their joys ;
But rage soon takes possession of each breast,
And dread confusion reigns around the feast,
When Keith—'twas he himself—with daring brow,
Thus speaks the purpose of his visit now :—
" I come to claim this lady as my bride;
Nay, frown not so—I will not be denied—
But dare to thwart my will, and by the rood,
I '11 make each craven here the eagle's food !"
" Strike down the braggart !" was the general cry,
"By heaven, the treacherous Keith deserves to die !"
Scarce said the words, when forth the chieftain drew
A silver mounted horn, and quickly blew
A shrill and startling summons ;—at the call
His banded followers rush into the hall.
Instant ensues a fierce and bloody fray,
Too darkly wild and tragic to pourtray
The clash of swords and shouts of men arise,
Mingled with women's wild heart-rending cries.
The gallant Gunns, tho' few, fight nobly all ;
But, in the end, o'erpowered and butchered fail.
Among the rest, the bridegroom on the floor,
Pierced deep with wounds, lies weltering in his gore.
But who may paint the anguish of the bride ?
Ah, happier far, if she then too had died !
In frantic agony she tore her hair,
That fell dishevelled round her forehead fair,
And prayed to heaven to avenge this deed of blood,
And smite the ruthless murderers where they stood.
In vain she wept—in vain to heaven did pray—

Distracted, screaming, she is borne away,
By the fell hands that laid her bridegroom low,
To drink on earth the bitterest cup of woe.

In tower of Ackergill, whose massy hold
Looks o'er yon noble bay—so grim and old
The beauteous Helen weeps the hours away,
Her once dark ringlets are already grey.
The wretched captive, pale and woe begone,
And sick with suffering makes her plaint to none ;
But inly hopes that death will shortly close
Her life's dark span with all its nameless woes.
Her cell-like chamber has one narrow pane,
That fronts the blue and melancholy main ;
The rays of heaven but faintly light the room,
And scarce a sound of gladness cheers the gloom.
From morn to night, within that chamber lone,
She only hears the wild, wild billow moan,
Or burst around her, with terrific roar,
When the storm visiteth that desert shore.
If to her sad and lonely couch she goes,
To seek a brief oblivion of her woes,
Her sleep is troubled,—to her mental sight
Still busy fancy paints her wedding night,
And the wild tragedy seems acted o'er,
With all its fearful horrors, in Braemore.

The Keith still tried her widowed heart to gain,
His threats and blandishments were all in vain ;
She turned from him with loathing and disgust,
Her heart was his that slumbered in the dust.

In this sad state of wretchedness and fear,
No eye to pity, and no voice to cheer,
Two months she now had spent, and day by day,
The lonely mourner seemed to pine away,
Like a sweet flower that withers on the sight,
Nipt in the blossom by untimely blight;
So Helen sunk and faded to the tomb,
A virgin flower in brighter climes to bloom.

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